United Nations

Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Twenty-second session (17 January-4 February 2000)

Twenty-third session (12-30 June 2000)

General Assembly

Official Records
Fifty-fifth session
Supplement No. 38 (A/55/38)

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Contents

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
	Part one Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its twenty-second session*		
	Letter of transmittal		2
I.	Matters brought to the attention of States parties		3
	A. Statement of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the legal framework for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the links between the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Platform for Action	1–5	3
	B. Decisions		3
II.	Organizational and other matters	6–22	4
	A. States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	6–7	4
	B. Opening of the session	8–14	4
	C. Attendance	15–16	5
	D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	17	5
	E. Report of the pre-session working group	18–21	6
	F. Composition and organization of work of the working groups	22	6
III.	Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the twenty-first and twenty-second sessions of the Committee	23–27	6
IV.	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention	28–416	7
	A. Introduction	28–29	7
	B. Consideration of reports of States parties	30–416	7
	1. Initial reports	30–138	7
	India	30–90	7
	Myanmar	91–138	12
	2. Initial and second periodic reports	139–193	16

* Originally issued as document A/55/38 (Part I) of 1 May 2000.

		Jordan	139–193	16
	3.	Initial report and second and third periodic reports	194–238	21
		Democratic Republic of the Congo	194–238	21
	4.	Combined second and third periodic reports	239–286	25
		Burkina Faso	239–286	25
	5.	Combined second and third periodic reports and fourth periodic reports	287–333	29
		Germany	287–333	29
	6.	Third periodic reports	334–416	34
		Belarus	334–378	34
		Luxembourg	379–416	38
V.	Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee		417–425	42
VI.	Implementation of article 21 of the Convention		426–429	44
VII.	Provisional agenda for the twenty-third session		430	45
VIII.	Adoption of the report		431	45
	Part two Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its twenty-third session			47
	Letter of transmittal			48
I.	Matters brought to the attention of States parties			49
	A.	Decisions		49
	B.	Suggestion		49
II.	Organizational and other matters		1–21	49
	A.	States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	1–2	49
	B.	Opening of the session	3–13	49
	C.	Attendance	14–15	51
	D.	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	16	51
	E.	Report of the pre-session working group	17–20	51
	F.	Composition and organization of work of the working groups	21	51
III.	Report of the Chairperson on the activities undertaken between the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the Committee		22–27	52
IV.	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention		28–322	53
	A.	Introduction	28–29	53
	B.	Consideration of reports of States parties	30–322	53

1.	Initial reports	30–117	53
	Cameroon	30–66	53
	Republic of Moldova	67–117	56
2.	Initial and second periodic reports	118–165	61
	Lithuania	118–165	61
3.	Combined second and third periodic reports	166–210	66
	Iraq	166–210	66
4.	Combined third and fourth periodic reports and fifth periodic reports	211–243	70
	Austria	211–243	70
5.	Fourth periodic reports	244–277	73
	Cuba	244–277	73
6.	Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports	278–322	77
	Romania	278–322	77
V.	Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee	323–330	82
VI.	Implementation of article 21 of the Convention	331–334	84
VII.	Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session	335	84
VIII.	Adoption of the report	336	85

Annexes

I.	States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as at 1 August 2000	86
II.	States parties that have deposited with the Secretary-General instruments of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention	90
III.	States parties that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol	91
IV.	Documents before the Committee at its twenty-second and twenty-third sessions	93
V.	Membership of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	96
VI.	Status of submission and consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as at 1 August 2000	97

Part one
Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its twenty-second session

Letter of transmittal

19 April 2000

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, according to which the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, established pursuant to the Convention, "shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities".

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women held its twenty-second session from 17 January to 4 February 2000 at United Nations Headquarters. It adopted its report on the session at the 466th meeting, on 4 February 2000. The report of the Committee is herewith submitted to you for transmission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

(*Signed*) Aida **González Martínez**
Chairperson
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

His Excellency Mr. Kofi **Annan**
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

Chapter I
Matters brought to the attention of States parties

A. Statement of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the legal framework for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the links between the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Platform for Action

1. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex), now in force for over 18 years, has been ratified by 165 States to date. It is the only international instrument to set forth the human rights standards for women and girls in the full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural areas of both public and private life. It is widely known as "the Women's Convention".

2. Many nations that have ratified the Convention have integrated it into their constitutional and legislative framework. It therefore has significance for women in the fields of both domestic and international law and has been influential in the formulation and implementation of government policy and in the development of the domestic jurisprudence that has advanced the human rights of women in all regions of the world.

3. The Convention and the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women[1] are closely connected. The Convention's rights and provisions encompass all areas of concern set forth in the Platform for Action and its monitoring process enables the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to ensure compliance with both the Platform for Action and the Convention. It is the only international instrument that provides both the legal framework for the Platform for Action and the means by which it may be realized.

4. One concrete outcome of the recommendations of the Platform for Action was the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the Convention (General Assembly resolution 54/4, annex). Since it was opened for signature, ratification and accession on 10 December 1999, 24 States parties have signed it and a number of others have indicated that they will act for early ratification. Upon the entry into force of the Optional Protocol, the Committee will be responsible for implementing this important new international instrument. By this means too, the Platform for Action will continue to be monitored.

5. The Convention and the monitoring process established under it will play a crucial role in ensuring that the goals of the Platform for Action, as well as any fresh initiatives which emerge from the special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", to be convened in June 2000, will be achieved.

B. Decisions

Decision 22/I
Reports of States parties

The Committee decided that the Chairperson should address letters to those States parties that have not submitted two or more reports required under article 18 of the Convention recalling their treaty obligations in this regard.

Decision 22/II
List of issues and questions of the pre-session working group

The Committee decided that the list of issues and questions formulated by the pre-session working group on States parties whose reports are under consideration and the responses of those States thereto should be circulated to experts prior to the session at which the reports are to be examined.

Decision 22/III
Provision of information by States parties

The Committee decided that States parties presenting reports that wish to provide additional information through audio-visual or electronic means, including video, film and slides, should inform the Committee through the Secretariat of their intention to do so at least one month in advance of the presentation of their reports to the Committee.

Decision 22/ IV
Pre-session working group

The Committee decided that in drawing up the list of issues and questions with regard to periodic reports, the pre-session working group should formulate a short list of questions and issues focusing, if possible, on major areas of concern in regard to implementation of the Convention by States parties.

Chapter II
Organizational and other matters

A. States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

6. On 4 February 2000, the closing date of the twenty-second session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, there were 165 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979 and opened for signature, ratification and accession in New York in March 1980. In accordance with article 27, the Convention entered into force on 3 September 1981.

7. A list of States parties to the Convention is contained in annex I. A list of States parties that have accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention is contained in annex II. A list of States parties that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention is contained in annex III.

B. Opening of the session

8. The Committee held its twenty-second session at United Nations Headquarters, from 17 January to 4 February 2000. The Committee held 22 plenary meetings (445th-466th) and its working groups held 18 meetings. A list of the documents before the Committee is contained in annex IV, section A.

9. The session was opened by the Chairperson of the Committee, Aida González Martínez (Mexico), who had been elected at the twentieth session of the Committee in January 1999.

10. Addressing the Committee, Angela E. V. King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, informed the Committee that the General Assembly, in its resolution 54/4 of 6 October 1999, had adopted, and opened for signature, ratification and accession, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which had been finalized in March 1999 by the Commission on the Status of Women Open-ended Working Group on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol to the Convention. The Special Adviser stated that the adoption of the Optional Protocol by the Assembly represented the translation into reality of the commitments of the international community at both the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.

11. Ms. King also informed the Committee that, on 10 December 1999, the Optional Protocol had been opened for signature, ratification and accession and that 23 States had signed the Optional Protocol. Since then, she said, a further State had signed the Protocol. The Convention and the Optional Protocol, and their significance for women, were the focus of a panel discussion in which the Secretary-General participated. Other participants in the panel were: Aloisia Wörgetter, Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Elaboration of a Draft Optional Protocol; Bacre Waly Ndiaye, Director of the New York Office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Sujata Manohar, former judge of the Supreme Court of India; Fauzjia Kassindja, Equality Now; and Aida González Martínez, Chairperson of the Committee. Also, a joint statement on the Optional Protocol by the Special Adviser and Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, was issued.

12. The Special Adviser informed the Committee that, since the twenty-first session of the Committee, two States, the Niger and Tuvalu, had become parties to the Convention, bringing the number of States parties to 165. She also informed the Committee that the Secretary-General had written to all States that had not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention, requesting them to consider doing so before the end of 2000. She also informed the Committee of several of the activities she had undertaken to encourage ratification and acceptance of the Convention and the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the

Convention. She noted that, currently, only 23 States parties had accepted the amendment, the most recent being Turkey, on 9 December 1999.

13. The Special Adviser described some of the activities concerning the Convention and the Committee undertaken by the Division for the Advancement of Women since the twenty-first session. These included the Judicial Colloquium on the application of international human rights law at the domestic level, which had been held at the United Nations Office at Vienna to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex). A subregional training workshop on preparing initial reports required under the Convention had taken place in Cotonou, Benin, in July 1999 and had been attended by nine countries in francophone Africa, most of which had not presented initial reports.

14. Turning to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century", to be held in June 2000, the Special Adviser highlighted the preparatory meetings convened by the regional commissions. She also informed the Committee that she had attended two such meetings, including the sixth African Regional Conference on Women to assess progress in the implementation of the Beijing and Dakar Platforms for Action, held in Addis Ababa from 22 to 26 November 1999, and the Arab Conference on Integrated Follow-up to the United Nations Global Conferences, held in Beirut from 29 November to 1 December 1999. Carolyn Hannan, a principal officer in the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, attended, on behalf of the Special Adviser, the high-level intergovernmental meetings to review the regional implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, held in Bangkok from 26 to 29 October 1999. The meeting of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), which was held from 17 to 21 January 2000 to assess implementation of the Platform for Action, was attended by Yakin Ertürk, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women. The Special Adviser indicated that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) would meet for the same purpose early in February 2000.

C. Attendance

15. All members of the Committee attended the twenty-second session, with the exception of Carlota Bustelo and Carmel Shalev. Emna Aouij attended from 17 to 28 January; Naela Gabr attended from 24 to 28 January; Rosalyn Hazelle attended from 17 to 26 January; Anne Lise Ryel attended from 18 to 26 January; and Kongit Sinegiorgis attended from 24 January to 4 February 2000.

16. A list of the members of the Committee, indicating their terms of office, is contained in annex V.

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

17. The Committee considered the provisional agenda and organization of work (CEDAW/C/2000/I/1) at its 445th meeting, on 19 January 2000. The agenda as adopted was as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the twenty-first and twenty-second sessions of the Committee.
4. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
5. Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
6. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee.
7. Provisional agenda for the twenty-third session.
8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twenty-second session.

E. Report of the pre-session working group

18. The Committee had decided, at its ninth session,[2] to convene a pre-session working group for five days before each session to prepare lists of issues and questions relating to periodic reports that would be considered by the Committee at the session. The pre-session working group for the twenty-second session of the Committee was held from 28 June to 2 July 1999.

19. The following members representing different regional groups participated in the working group: Salma Khan (Asia and the Pacific); Ivanka Corti (Europe); and Rosalyn Hazelle (Latin America and the Caribbean).

20. The working group prepared lists of issues and questions relating to the reports of four States parties, namely, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Germany and Luxembourg.

21. At the 447th meeting on 19 January 2000, the Chairperson of the pre-session working group, Salma Khan, introduced the report of the working group (CEDAW/C/1999/II/CRP.1 and Add.1-4).

F. Composition and organization of work of the working groups

22. At its 445th meeting, on 19 January 2000, the Committee decided to take up issues under agenda items 5 (Implementation of article 21 of the Convention) and 6 (Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee) as a working group of the whole. The issues that it decided to consider were the revised rules of procedure of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

Chapter III
Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the twenty-first and twenty-second sessions of the Committee

23. Reporting on her activities since the last session of the Committee, Aida González Martínez, Chairperson of the Committee, indicated that she had attended a workshop organized by the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and co-sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on possible indicators of civil and political rights. Discussion at the workshop centred on possible indicators of human rights within the framework of three areas, which included administration of justice, democracy and participation and personal security. The workshop was attended by 19 persons, among them experts from academic institutions; the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; a member of the Committee against Torture; members of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights; and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, as well as experts on human rights.

24. The Chairperson had attended the Third Committee at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and made a statement during the discussion of the agenda item entitled "Advancement of women". She informed the Committee that the adoption of the Optional Protocol on 6 October 1999 by the Assembly was a step forward not only for the Committee, but also for women at large. The Chairperson noted that, during the debate of the Third Committee, most delegations had expressed support for the work of the Committee.

25. The Chairperson informed the Committee that she had forwarded a message to the Judicial Colloquium held in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the tenth anniversary of the adoption by the Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The message had been read by Emna Aouij, a member of the Committee, who was keynote speaker at the Colloquium.

26. The Chairperson informed the Committee that she had participated in the special signing ceremony of the Optional Protocol that took place on 10 December 1999 and in the round table held on the same day, with the participation of the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, where the implications and the scope of the Optional Protocol and of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women were discussed. She indicated that among the issues she had highlighted in her presentation was the Committee's

need for additional resources to effectively fulfil its responsibilities, as outlined in the Optional Protocol, in particular the professional staff needed to study and analyse communications and relevant national legislation.

27. The Chairperson concluded by noting the growing influence of the Convention and the Committee, as reflected in different meetings and events that had taken place in the reporting period. In particular, she drew attention to the Workshop on the Convergence and Divergence between the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Islamic Law (Sharia) organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which took place in November 1999. She indicated that the Committee had been represented at this workshop by its Rapporteur, Ayse Feride Açar, whose participation had been commended by the organizers.

Chapter IV
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

A. Introduction

28. At its twenty-second session, the Committee considered the reports of eight State parties submitted under article 18 of the Convention: two initial reports; the initial and second reports of one State party; the initial and second and third periodic reports of one State party; one combined second and third periodic report; the combined second and third periodic report and fourth periodic report of one State party; and two third periodic reports.

29. As decided at its thirteenth session in 1994, the Committee prepared concluding comments on each report considered. The Committee's concluding comments on the report of each State party, as prepared by the members of the Committee, and a summary of the introductory presentations by the representatives of the States parties are provided below.

B. Consideration of reports of States parties

1. Initial reports

India

30. The Committee considered the initial report of India (CEDAW/C/IND/1) at its 452nd, 453rd and 462nd meetings, on 24 and 31 January 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.452, 453 and 462).

Introduction by the State party

31. The representative informed the Committee that India had ratified the Convention in July 1993 with two declarations and one reservation. She indicated that the preparation of the report had been preceded by wide-ranging consultations with a number of women's organizations. She noted that India had ratified a number of international human rights instruments and that the Indian Constitution prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex, as well as providing for affirmative action for women. India had initiated a consultative process in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women and was among the first countries to unreservedly accept the Beijing Platform for Action.

32. The representative indicated that among recent achievements in the implementation of the Convention had been the establishment, in March 1997, of a parliamentary committee on the empowerment of women, and the passage of constitutional amendments to reserve for women 33.33 per cent of the seats in the *Panchayati Raj* institutions at the local self-government level in rural areas and in municipalities in urban areas. She also stated that a bill had been introduced in late 1999 which would reserve not less than one third of the total number of seats filled by direct elections in the *Lok Sabha* (House of the People) and State Legislative Assemblies for women.

33. The representative described the national machinery for women's advancement coordinated by the Department of Women and Child Development, which is headed by a cabinet minister assisted by a minister of State. The National Commission for Women, established in 1992, served as a statutory ombudsperson for women, while the Central Social Welfare Board networked with nearly 12,000 women's non-governmental organizations. Institutional mechanisms for women's advancement also existed at

state level. The representative highlighted the ninth five-year plan (1997-2002), which had identified the empowerment of women as a strategy for development and mandated early finalization of a national policy on empowerment of women. She indicated that, pending the adoption of the national policy, many mechanisms identified therein had already been put in place. Recently, the Prime Minister's Office had directed that a review be made of the impact of gender mainstreaming in ministries and departments.

34. The representative indicated that progressive legislation to promote the interests of women existed at both state and central levels, and that the Government had tasked the National Council of Women to oversee the implementation of constitutional and legal safeguards for women. The review of 39 laws was under way; recommendations for amendments, including those with regard to the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, had been submitted; and a draft bill on violence against women had been prepared. *Lok adalats* (people's courts) and *parivarik mahila lok adalats* (family women's courts) had been established to provide less formal systems of justice delivery. India had a tradition of public interest litigation and the Supreme Court had issued landmark judgements, including on sexual harassment at the work place and child prostitution. Several training institutes had also introduced gender sensitization training for judicial officials.

35. The representative described steps that had been taken to revise curricula and textbooks from a gender perspective, and the efforts of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to ensure projection of positive images of women in the media. Measures to address prostitution and trafficking in women had included a proposal to amend the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act to widen its scope and increase penalties; the appointment of special police officers; and the establishment of protective homes and child development and child-care centres for the children of sex workers. A plan of action to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of women and children and to integrate victims into society had been developed, and India had actively participated in the drafting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

36. The representative indicated that, at the Fourth World Conference on Women, India had committed itself to increasing investment in education to 6 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), but that the target had not been achieved to date although the overall growth in literacy among women had been higher than that of men in recent years. Intensive efforts to address gender differentials in literacy and education were continuing and included the establishment of girls' learning centres to meet the needs of girls who were unable to gain access to formal education.

37. The representative informed the Committee that International Labour Organization (ILO) standards were reflected in Indian labour laws and the Government had been seeking to extend maternity benefits to all women and to provide child care for working women. Guidelines for employers with respect to sexual harassment had been established in a Supreme Court judgement and legislation reflecting those guidelines was being prepared. Efforts to recognize women's work in the informal sector and reflect it in the national census and to provide workers in the sector with labour protection had been initiated.

38. Significant improvements in women's health had been achieved in the last decade, although the high maternal mortality ratio remained a concern. The recently launched reproductive and child health programme sought to address women's health in a holistic manner. Measures to address human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) had been introduced and legislative and other strategies to confront female infanticide and sex-selective abortion had also been adopted.

39. The representative indicated that rural women constituted almost 80 per cent of the female population and reported that the Government had introduced quotas and women-specific schemes to ensure that they received an equal share in rural development and agricultural programmes.

40. The personal laws of the major religious communities had traditionally governed marital and family relations, with the Government maintaining a policy of non-interference in such laws in the absence of a demand for change from individual religious communities. However, the Family Courts Act, providing that family matters, such as marriage and

maintenance, came within the jurisdiction of the family courts, which incorporated informal procedures and counselling services, had been adopted. The representative drew attention to legislation concerning dowry-related violence and the provision of the Penal Code and Evidence Act regarding cruelty to a wife by her husband or his relatives.

41. In conclusion, the representative emphasized India's determined, concrete and sustained efforts to eliminate poverty and social disability and empower the poor and vulnerable.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

42. The Committee welcomes the submission of the initial report of India. While noting that the report conforms to the Committee's guidelines, it does not provide adequate information relating to implementation of some articles and the general issue of violence against women. The Committee further notes that the report was submitted with some delay. The report also does not contain information on measures taken to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The Committee appreciates the detailed written and oral responses of the delegation during the consideration of the report, which provided important additional information.

43. The Committee notes that the report and the oral and written responses do not provide adequate statistical data, disaggregated by sex and the States of the Union and information on the implementation of affirmation action measures for scheduled castes.

44. The Committee notes with concern that the Government does not intend to review the declarations entered to article 16, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Convention.

Positive aspects

45. The Committee recognizes that India has guaranteed in its Constitution fundamental human rights that can be enforced by an application to the Supreme Court. The Committee commends in particular the recognition of a fundamental right to gender equality and non-discrimination and a specific enabling provision on affirmative action in the Constitution.

46. The Committee appreciates the contribution made by the Supreme Court of India in developing the concept of social action litigation and a jurisprudence integrating the Convention into domestic law by interpreting Constitutional provisions on gender equality and non-discrimination.

47. The Committee commends the introduction of a range of policies and programmes by the Governments of India over the years to improve the situation of women. It notes with appreciation that those programmes have contributed to some extent to improving the quality of social indicators for women in various States of the Union. The Committee welcomes the proposal to formulate a new gender empowerment policy and the directives sent from the Prime Minister's Office to mainstream gender issues and a rights approach to development at the national level.

48. The Committee commends the Government of India for establishing the National Commission for Women and state commissions for women with responsibility for developing action plans on gender and proposals for law reform.

49. The Committee commends the Government for introducing affirmative action measures that have enabled 33 per cent of seats in local government bodies to be reserved for women. It welcomes the proposed bill to reserve 33 per cent seats in state and national assemblies for women, and the assurance in the oral presentations that 30 to 40 per cent coverage will be provided for women in programmes that give access to credit.

50. The Committee commends the Government for introducing legislation that has banned sex-selective abortions. It welcomes the amendments to the law on nationality, which confer equal rights on men and women.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

51. The Committee notes that India has a very large and mainly rural population living in absolute poverty and that the feminization of poverty and growing income disparities prevent the benefits of economic development being transferred to women.

52. The Committee considers that widespread poverty, such social practices as the caste system and son preference, as reflected in a high incidence of

violence against women, significant gender disparities and an adverse sex ratio, present major obstacles to the implementation of the Convention.

53. The Committee notes that the existence of regional disparities is an impediment to the effective implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

54. The Committee notes that the Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action have not been integrated into policy planning and programmes. While there have been several national plans in the pre- and post-Beijing period, the Committee notes that these adopt a welfare approach towards women.

55. The Committee recommends that the proposed gender empowerment policy integrate the Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action and a rights-based approach.

56. The Committee considers that inadequate allocation of resources for women's development in the social sector and inadequate implementation of laws are serious impediments to the realization of women's human rights in India.

57. The Committee urges the allocation of sufficient and targeted resources for women's development in the social sector, as well as full implementation of relevant laws.

58. The Committee notes that there are many gaps in the legislative framework. The Committee considers that there is an urgent need to introduce comprehensive legislative reform to promote equality and the human rights of women.

59. The Committee recommends that proposals of the National Commission of Women on law reform be used in preparing new legislation and that the Commission be entrusted with the task of developing working papers on legal reform in critical areas, within a time-frame.

60. The Committee notes that steps have not been taken to reform the personal laws of different religious and ethnic groups, in consultation with them, so as to conform with the Convention. The Committee is concerned that the Government's policy of non-intervention perpetuates sexual stereotypes, son preference and discrimination against women.

61. The Committee urges the Government to withdraw its declaration to article 16, paragraph 1, of the Convention and to work with and support women's groups as members of the community in reviewing and reforming these personal laws. The Committee also calls upon the Government to follow the directive principles in the Constitution and Supreme Court decisions and enact a uniform civil code that different ethnic and religious groups may adopt.

62. The Committee is concerned that India has not yet established a comprehensive and compulsory system of registration of births and marriages. The Committee notes that inability to prove those important events by documentation prevents effective implementation of laws that protect girls from sexual exploitation and trafficking, child labour and forced or early marriage. The Committee is also concerned that failure to register marriages may also prejudice the inheritance rights of women.

63. The Committee calls upon the Government to provide adequate resources and establish a system of compulsory registration of births and monitor implementation in cooperation with women's groups and local bodies. It urges the Government to withdraw the declaration to article 16, paragraph 2 of the Convention.

64. The Committee is concerned that the fundamental right to education under the Constitution recognized by the Supreme Court has not been realized by providing girls with access to primary and secondary education. It notes that budgetary allocation for education is still far below India's commitment with regard to the Beijing Platform for Action.

65. The Committee urges the Government to take affirmative action, set a time-frame and provide adequate resources for primary and secondary education so as to give girls equal access to education and eradicate adult illiteracy among women. It calls upon the Government to make primary and secondary education compulsory by introducing and enforcing relevant regulations.

66. The Committee is concerned that the fundamental rights recognized in the Constitution can be enforced only against State actors and in the event of inaction on the part of the State. It also notes that the private sector, where a great number of women are employed, and which is expanding in a period of transition to

market economic policies, is not covered by constitutional standards.

67. The Committee recommends that a sex discrimination act be introduced to make the standards of the Convention and the Constitution applicable to non-State action and inaction.

68. The Committee is concerned that there is a high incidence of gender-based violence against women, which takes even more extreme forms because of customary practices, such as dowry, sati and the devadasi system. Discrimination against women who belong to particular castes or ethnic or religious groups is also manifest in extreme forms of physical and sexual violence and harassment.

69. The Committee urges the Government to implement existing legislation prohibiting such practices as dowry, devadasi and caste-based discrimination. It calls upon the Government to strengthen law enforcement and introduce reforms proposed by the National Commission on Women and women activists in regard to the law on rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

70. The Committee recommends that a national plan of action be developed to address the issue of gender-based violence in a holistic manner, in line with the Committee's general recommendations 19 and 24. It calls upon the Government to provide statistics and information on violence against women in its next report.

71. The Committee is concerned that women are exposed to the risk of high levels of violence, rape, sexual harassment, humiliation and torture in areas where there are armed insurrections.

72. The Committee recommends a review of prevention of terrorism legislation and the Armed Forces Special Provisions Act, in consultation with the Human Rights Commission of India, the National Commission of Women and civil society, so that special powers given to the security forces do not prevent the investigation and prosecution of acts of violence against women in conflict areas and during detention and arrest. The Committee recommends that women be given an opportunity to make their contribution to peaceful conflict resolution.

73. The Committee recommends the introduction of gender sensitization and human rights programmes for the police, the security forces and medical professionals, in addition to programmes already undertaken.

74. The Committee is concerned with the continuing discrimination, including violence, suffered by women of the Dalit community, despite the passage of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (prevention of atrocities) Act of 1989.

75. The Committee urges the Government to enforce laws preventing discrimination against Dalit women and prohibiting the devadasi system. It urges the Government to introduce affirmative action programmes in such areas as education, employment and health so as to provide life chances to Dalit women and girls and create an environment conducive to their progress. The Committee calls upon the Government to set a time-frame for those interventions and provide information on the progress made in the next report.

76. The Committee is concerned that women and girls are exploited in prostitution and inter-State and cross-border trafficking. It is also concerned that those women are exposed to HIV/AIDS and health risks and that existing legislation encourages mandatory testing and isolation.

77. The Committee calls upon the Government to review existing legislation on trafficking and forced prostitution and to strengthen law enforcement. It recommends the development of bilateral and inter-State controls and reintegration and advocacy programmes to prevent the exploitation of women and girls in forced prostitution and trafficking.

78. The Committee notes with concern that maternal mortality rates and infant mortality rates are among the highest in the world. It also notes the adverse sex ratio and the incidence of sex-selective abortions despite the law banning that practice. It notes that family planning is only targeted at women.

79. The Committee recommends the adoption of a holistic approach to women's health throughout the life cycle in the country's health programme. It urges the Government to allocate resources from a "women's right to health" perspective, following the guidelines of the Committee's general recommendation 24. The Committee calls upon the Government to elicit the support of medical associations in enforcing professional ethics and preventing sex-selective abortions. The Committee also recommends that the Government obtain the support of the medical

profession in creating awareness of the urgent need to eliminate practices associated with son preference.

80. The Committee is concerned about the low participation of qualified women in the administration and the judiciary, including family courts and *lok adalats* or conciliation tribunals.

81. The Committee urges the Government to take affirmative action to increase women's participation in the judiciary and *lok adalats*, and provide sex-disaggregated data in its next report.

82. The Committee is concerned with significant disparities in economic activity rates for men and women. It is concerned that the practice of debt bondage and the denial of inheritance rights in land result in gross exploitation of women's labour and their impoverishment.

83. The Committee requests the Government to enforce laws on bonded labour and provide women with self-employment opportunities and minimum wages in home-based production and the non-formal sector. It calls upon the Government to review laws on inheritance urgently and to ensure that rural women obtain access to land and credit.

84. The Committee is concerned that the National Commission on Women has no power to enforce its proposals for law reform or intervene to prevent discrimination in the private or public sector. It notes that the National Commission and state commissions are not supported by adequate financial and other resources. It also notes that the National Commission on Women is not as well resourced or as empowered as the Human Rights Commission of India, and that it has no formal link with the state women's commissions.

85. The Committee recommends that non-governmental organizations be represented on the National Commission of Women. The Commission's powers should be as wide as those of the Human Rights Commission and include a complaints procedure. The Committee recommends that state commissions be similarly strengthened and linked with the National Commission.

86. The Committee is concerned that, despite the willingness of the Government to work with non-governmental organizations and women's groups, women activists and human rights defenders are exposed to violence and harassment in the communities in which they work.

87. The Committee urges the Government to strictly enforce the law and protect women activists and human rights defenders from acts of violence and harassment.

88. The Committee encourages India to deposit its acceptance to the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention as soon as possible.

89. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in its concluding comments.

90. The Committee encourages the wide dissemination in India of the present concluding comments in order to make the people, civil society and Government sectors aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality of women, as well as further steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to disseminate widely, in all local languages, the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Myanmar

91. The Committee considered the initial report of Myanmar (CEDAW/C/MMR/1) at its 450th, 451st and 457th meetings, on 21 and 26 January 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.450, 451 and 457).

Introduction by the State party

92. In his introduction, the representative of Myanmar informed the Committee that the existing laws and social practices of the country were compatible with the Convention. He noted that the successive constitutions of Myanmar had included provisions for women's rights and equality and that women had legal equality with men in the political, economic, administrative and social spheres.

93. The representative informed the Committee that women and men in Myanmar had equal access to health services. He drew attention to the national health plan, which had the goal of "Health for all by the year 2000" and included activities on maternal and child health, birth spacing, reproductive health, nutritional development, an expanded programme of immunization and measures for the control of sexually transmitted diseases. Myanmar sought to provide a holistic, life-cycle approach to health care for women.

94. The representative informed the Committee that Myanmar had set goals for women's health to be reached by the year 2000: a reduction in infant mortality from 47.1 per 1,000 live births to less than 45; a reduction in the maternal mortality rate from 1 per 1,000 live births to 0.5; an improvement in tetanus immunization to more than 90 per cent for infants and pregnant women; the provision of information on prevention of HIV/AIDS to all youth and women; a reduction in iodine deficiency disorders from 33.08 per cent to less than 20 per cent; the provision to pregnant women of access to pre-natal care, safe delivery, referral services and birth-spacing information; and a reduction in iron deficiency anaemia among pregnant women.

95. The representative informed the Committee that the most important issue regarding women's health was safe delivery. He noted that there was no statutory provision for abortion services, but that there were provisions for medical care and contraception for women who had undergone unsafe abortions. Nutrition was also an essential issue and objectives included adoption of a national breast-feeding policy to promote exclusive breastfeeding to the age of four or six months. The representative noted that the fight against AIDS had been given top priority by the Government, since HIV/AIDS was currently seen in high-risk groups across the country and was starting to spread to low-risk groups. Research had been conducted to support the prevention and control of AIDS and the participation of non-governmental organizations in AIDS control activities had been encouraged.

96. The representative noted that health-related activities were made more effective by the participation of non-governmental organizations, such as the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, the Myanmar Medical Association (Women's Section) and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The reproductive health activities conducted by the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, other ministries and the private sector, included: life skills training for women of childbearing age and for youth; prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases; community education programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention; AIDS education in schools; capacity-building for community organizations and volunteers; expansion of birth-spacing programmes; and integrated management of the programmes on maternal and childhood illnesses.

97. The representative informed the Committee that a national workshop on the priority issues affecting women's health had been conducted in December 1999 by the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO). Counselling centres had been established around the country and training had been conducted on counselling techniques.

98. The representative informed the Committee that cooperation was ongoing between the Government, the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs, United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide basic education for every individual, regardless of sex. The Ministry of Education had carried out non-formal education projects in collaboration with United Nations agencies. Mobile units had been used to educate women in border areas. In addition, vocational training such as sewing, embroidery and livestock breeding had been initiated in collaboration with UNDP and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Literacy resource centres were established by the Myanmar Educational Research Bureau and the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (Japan).

99. The representative informed the Committee that, prior to March 1999, the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs had identified six areas of concern: education, health, economy, violence against women, culture and the girl child. Two further critical areas of concern had recently been identified: environment and the media.

100. In concluding the presentation, the representative noted that Myanmar was trying its best to implement the national plan of action for the advancement of women, but that there were difficulties, such as a lack of sex-specific data. In 1997 the Government had begun collecting gender-specific data at the request of the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs. He noted that Myanmar required technical assistance and financial resources in order to reach its goals more quickly.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

101. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Myanmar for submitting its initial report and for engaging in a constructive dialogue with the Committee. It also commends the Government's efforts to produce an informative response, including some statistics, in a very short time. The Committee notes, however, that the report does not include sufficient reliable statistical data disaggregated by sex and provides insufficient information relating to the implementation of a number of articles in the Convention.

102. The Committee welcomes the fact that Myanmar ratified the Convention without reservations on substantive articles.

103. The Committee commends the Government of Myanmar for sending a high-level delegation, including an adviser of the Ministry of National Planning and Development.

Positive aspects

104. The Committee welcomes the fact that Myanmar has national machinery for the advancement of women comprising the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs, which is designated as the national focal point for women's affairs, and the Myanmar National Working Committee, which incorporates women from the grass-roots level and has implementation functions.

105. The Committee notes with appreciation that the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, the country's largest non-governmental organization, with branches and associations all over the country, has been working closely with the Government in the area of women's health, in particular, maternal health.

106. The Committee notes with satisfaction that in Myanmar women have the same rights as men to acquire, administer and dispose of property and that a wife has the right to transfer half of the marital property into her name upon divorce.

107. The Committee notes with satisfaction the high literacy rate of women in Myanmar.

108. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the legal age for marriage is 20 years for both sexes.

109. The Committee welcomes the fact that wife abuse is not common in Myanmar. It also commends the Government for initiating further research on domestic violence with a view to eradicating this phenomenon altogether and raising community awareness of existing laws in this regard.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

110. The Committee notes that internal ethnic and political conflict has brought about social, economic and political instability in Myanmar and that the conflict is a serious obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

111. The Committee is concerned that the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs, comprising deputy ministers of related ministries, representatives of the Attorney-General and the Chief Justice, and leaders of women's non-governmental organizations, does not receive any budget allocation from the Government despite its responsibilities for policy-making and its role as an intersectoral coordinating body. The Committee is further concerned that the Myanmar National Working Committee for Women's Affairs, an operational body, is exclusively comprised of voluntary members.

112. The Committee urges the Government to revise existing funding allocation policies to ensure that the national machinery has sufficient financial and human resources effectively to carry out its mandate and that members of the Myanmar National Committee should include those nominated on the basis of their expertise in the relevant fields.

113. The Committee welcomes the recent order of the Government of Myanmar, which overruled those provisions of the Towns Act and the Village Act that authorized the Government to extract forced labour from women. The Committee considers forced labour of women to be a contemporary form of slavery and a denial of their rights. The Committee, however, is concerned that the Towns Act and the Village Act remains as legislation. It is further concerned that there is little information about the implementation and enforcement of the recent order.

114. The Committee requests the Government to include in its next report more information and data on the process of implementation of the order and recommends that the Government take the action necessary to bring perpetrators to justice.

115. The Committee notes with concern that, although Myanmar has 135 ethnic groups, there is little information in its report about how the human rights of women in all ethnic groups are guaranteed, protected and promoted.

116. The Committee requests the Government to include in its next report more information and data on the situation of women in as many ethnic minority groups as possible and the measures taken by the Government of Myanmar to protect and ensure their human rights under the Convention.

117. The Committee is concerned about violations of the human rights of women, in particular by military personnel.

118. The Committee urges the Government to prosecute and punish those who violate the human rights of women, including military personnel, and to carry out human rights education and gender-sensitization training for all law enforcement and military personnel.

119. The Committee notes with concern that there is little information on the trafficking in women and girls, despite the magnitude of the problem.

120. The Committee requests the Government to include in its next report more information and data on the situation of trafficking in women and girls.

121. The Committee is concerned with the increasing number of women with HIV/AIDS.

122. The Committee requests more information on the situation of women affected by HIV/AIDS, including women in trafficking and prostitution, in the next periodic report. Information should also be given on their access to health care, as well as the Government's efforts to educate women, and on measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

123. The Committee expresses its concern about the situation of women in prison and police custody.

124. The Committee requests the Government to include more information on women in custody in its next report, including data on custodial violence and the protection of the human rights of women in custody.

125. The Committee is concerned with the restricted admission of women to certain courses in higher education, which contravenes article 10 (b) and (c) of the Convention.

126. The Committee urges the Government to modify the policies on restricted admission, noting that the women themselves should be entitled to decide which subjects they wish to study and professions they wish to pursue.

127. The Committee notes with concern that the information provided on primary education is insufficient, in particular in regard to the enrolment of girls.

128. The Committee requests the Government to include more information and data with regard to primary education in its next report. The Committee also recommends that the Government set numerical targets for enrolment in primary education and that it report on the results of the implementation of such targets.

129. The Committee is concerned that there is no information on a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy resulting from sexual violence. The Committee is also concerned with the high rate of maternal mortality in Myanmar, since it notes that induced abortion often results in maternal mortality.

130. The Committee urges the Government to extend the coverage of the contraceptive distribution programme to reduce maternal mortality from unsafe abortions. The Committee requests the Government to include in its next report more information on sexual violence and pregnancies resulting from rape and the services that are available to the victims.

131. The Committee expresses concern at the absence of an enabling environment in Myanmar to ensure the full implementation of the Convention.

132. The Committee recommends that, in rebuilding its economic and political structures, the Government ensure the full and equal participation of women in an open and pluralistic society.

133. The Committee expresses the hope that the new constitution currently being drafted will guarantee gender equality and include a definition of "sex discrimination". The Committee also expresses the

hope that the new constitution will incorporate the Convention in domestic law.

134. The Committee recommends that statistical data disaggregated by sex be included in the next report and that information be provided with regard to implementation of all articles of the Convention.

135. The Committee encourages the Government to ratify the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

136. The Committee also encourages the Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

137. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments.

138. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Myanmar of the present concluding comments in order to make the people and, in particular, governmental administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality of women and of the further steps that are required. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely — particularly to women's and human rights organizations — the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

2. Initial and second periodic reports

Jordan

139. The Committee considered the first and second periodic reports of Jordan (CEDAW/C/JOR/1 and 2) at its 448th, 449th and 456th meetings, on 20 and 26 January 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.448, 449 and 456).

Introduction by the State party

140. In presenting the initial and second periodic reports, the representative noted that developments in the State party since the ratification of the Convention in July 1992 had been mostly positive and beneficial to women. She emphasized the partnership between the official and non-governmental sectors in relation to women's issues, and that non-governmental organizations had been a major partner in preparing the second report. National machinery for the advancement of women, namely the Jordanian National Commission for Women, chaired by Princess Basma bint Talal, had been established with extensive tasks, including development of legislative proposals and of policies to eliminate discrimination against women. In addition to the Convention, Jordan was a State party to other international human rights instruments of particular relevance to women.

141. Although the Jordanian Constitution enshrined the principle of equality of all citizens, the representative noted that equality was not yet fully reflected in all national laws. Since 1992, legislation related to the right of women to leased property had been amended and labour legislation had been revised to increase protection against termination of employment due to pregnancy, as well as to provide maternity-related benefits, including maternity leave. Amendments to civil status and passports regulations now enabled divorced or widowed women to be registered as heads of family.

142. The representative referred to a number of proposed revisions to the Penal Code that were currently before Parliament, including amendments to the penalty for adultery and for violence against women, including rape or murder. A proposal to repeal article 340 of the Penal Code, which exonerated a man for killing or injuring his wife or certain female relatives in an adulterous situation, had also been placed before Parliament, as had bills to amend the Passport Law and the Civil Status Law.

143. The Government was studying several other proposed amendments, including to the social security law, the civil retirement law, the nationality law, the civil health insurance regulations and a draft new civil status code. The representative underlined that legislative reform was accelerated by the high-level political will for such reform and for policy measures for women, as demonstrated by the late King Hussein and by King Abdullah II.

144. The representative noted that in the light of progress made, the national strategy for women of 1993 would be updated. A national programme of action for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action had also been adopted. Both documents had been prepared in joint efforts of various ministries and representatives of civil society. The recent inclusion of a gender perspective in the country's economic and

social development plan for 1999-2003 was an indication of the Government's commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action.

145. Women's participation in political and public life had improved modestly in Jordan since ratification of the Convention, with progress hindered by prevalent social and cultural patterns that were not yet receptive to such changes. Women had been almost continuously present in the Cabinet since 1993, and for the first time in the country's history a woman currently occupied the post of Deputy Prime Minister. Women's representation had also increased within ministries and in the Senate, and there were now a total of seven women members of the judiciary. Women had made less progress in gaining electoral office, and none of the 17 women candidates was elected to Parliament in the 1997 elections. A petition to institute a transitional quota system to allocate at least 20 per cent of parliamentary seats to women had been rejected by the Government on the basis that women did not constitute a sector or a minority but half of society. Following the appointment of 99 women to municipal and rural councils throughout the country, 10 women had been elected to rural and municipal councils in 1999.

146. The representative informed the Committee that there was no gender gap in enrolment rates in the basic and secondary levels of education and that female enrolment at the university level had reached 48 per cent of total enrolment. Although the female illiteracy rate remained higher than that of men, it had dropped from 48 per cent in 1979 to 20.6 per cent in 1994 among women 15 years or older and was decreasing much faster than that of men. The illiteracy rate remained highest among the rural population, which constituted 20 per cent of the country's population. Literacy centres were being set up throughout the country, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations. A new postgraduate programme on women's studies had been introduced at a public university. In May 1999, a national commission for human rights education had been established.

147. Although there were no discriminatory legislative provisions relating to employment, women's participation in the active workforce remained low, at 13.6 per cent, with women in the 20 to 34-year age group having the highest rate of participation. Women's monthly pay was 85.7 per cent that of men and their unemployment rate nearly double. Recently, a minimum wage had been set, which was expected to directly benefit women working in the private sector.

148. The representative noted that, in partnership with non-governmental organizations, remarkable improvements had been made in regard to women's health. Reproductive health indicators had improved, including improved pregnancy health care, an increase in medically supervised births, lowered maternal mortality rates and increased use of contraceptives. Improvements had also been made in health services for special groups of women, including the elderly and women with disabilities.

149. The representative indicated that clear and positive change had occurred regarding the elimination of domestic violence. Although there were no statistics on its occurrence, patterns of increased violence had led to the creation of a family protection department in the Directorate of Public Security to deal with cases of sexual assault on women and children. Non-governmental organizations and civil society institutions played a key role in efforts to eliminate domestic violence.

150. The representative noted that civil law affirmed equality between women and men. With regard to family relations, Jordan adhered to the tolerant principles of Islamic Shariah, but, while women had the right to determine their conditions for inclusion in the marriage contract, that provision was rarely used. Campaigns had been launched, especially by non-governmental organizations, to increase women's awareness and use of those rights.

151. Despite a clear commitment at all levels to implement the Convention, the representative noted that obstacles to its full implementation remained. Political and economic realities of the region directly affected national priorities and thus implementation of the Convention. Poverty and the predominant social and cultural conditions limited improvements for women in such areas as employment, participation in public life and access to decision-making. In addition, monitoring and follow-up were made more difficult by a lack of data disaggregated by sex. In conclusion, the representative highlighted the political will to overcome those obstacles. The existence of national machinery for the advancement of women, with the participation of both government and non-governmental representatives, had made the opinions of grass-roots women accessible to decision makers

and further commitments would be achieved in the years ahead.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

152. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Jordan for submitting its initial report as well as a timely, detailed and well structured second periodic report, which follows the guidelines of the Committee and provides information about implementation of all the articles of the Convention. It commends the Government on its oral presentation and the replies to the Committee's questions that have further clarified recent developments in the State party. It appreciates the open manner in which the reports were prepared, in particular the extensive consultative process with non-governmental organizations during the preparation of the second periodic report.

153. The Committee commends the Government of Jordan for sending a high-level delegation headed by the Secretary-General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women, which established a constructive, open and sincere dialogue with the members of the Committee.

154. The Committee recognizes that the ratification of the Convention by Jordan constitutes an important step in the development of an egalitarian approach to women's rights in the country.

Positive aspects

155. The Committee commends the Government for having ratified the Convention in 1992. This ratification is an expression of the political will and the determination of the Government to work towards the full implementation of the Convention and the achievement of equality between women and men. It also appreciates the fact that the Government recognizes remaining areas of discrimination against women in law and practice.

156. The Committee appreciates the fact that the National Charter, which is not a legally binding document, expressly affirms the constitutional equality of women and men, who together contribute to the development and modernization of Jordanian society.

157. The Committee welcomes the work undertaken by the national machinery, namely the National Commission for Women, to implement the Convention, and its strong and cooperative links with non-governmental organizations.

158. The Committee welcomes the legislative reforms undertaken by the State party since ratification of the Convention, including reform of labour law, civil service regulations and regulations concerning the Family Document.

159. The Committee notes with satisfaction the level of education girls and women have achieved. In particular, the Committee expresses satisfaction that parity has been achieved in enrolment rates in the basic and secondary cycles and the fact that the gap between women and men in university education is closing. It also commends the Government's efforts to further reduce the female illiteracy rate.

160. The Committee notes with satisfaction that there is an increasing trend towards participation of women in the labour force, which contributes to the empowerment of women and strengthens their participation in public life in general.

161. The Committee welcomes with appreciation the fact that women's non-governmental organizations play an active role in public life. The Committee commends, in particular, their efforts to support the political, economic and social mobilization and empowerment of women.

162. The Committee commends the progress made in improving women's health, including the provision of reproductive health services and the prevalence of contraceptive use among married women.

163. The Committee notes that violence against women is now acknowledged as a critical area of concern that needs to be addressed through governmental action.

164. The Committee commends the Government on the preparation of a national strategy for women and of a national programme of action for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It notes with satisfaction that these were prepared in a collaborative effort, involving various government bodies, the national machinery and non-governmental organizations. It also welcomes the inclusion of a gender perspective in the economic and social development plan for 1999-2003 by including women's issues in all of the sectors covered by the plan.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

165. The Committee considers that the country's current socio-economic situation, including the doubling of the population, owing largely to refugee influx, and the scarcity of natural resources, affect the full implementation of the Convention. The persistence of strong stereotypical attitudes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men also constitute an impediment to the full implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

166. The Committee expresses its concern that cultural practices and strong stereotypical attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men, affecting all spheres of life and impeding the full implementation of the Convention, persist.

167. The Committee urges the Government to review or enact laws making illegal cultural practices that discriminate against women. The Committee urges the Government to increase awareness-raising programmes, as well as change stereotypical attitudes and perceptions about the roles and responsibilities of women and men.

168. The Committee expresses its concern that, although article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution contains the principle of equality of all Jordanians before the law, it does not contain a specific provision stating that there shall be no discrimination either de jure or de facto on the ground of sex.

169. The Committee calls on the Government to encourage a constitutional amendment to incorporate equality on the basis of sex in article 6 of the Constitution and to reflect fully article 1 of the Convention in the Constitution.

170. The Committee is also concerned that although the Convention acquired the force of law within the country upon ratification it has still not been published in the Official Gazette, which is a prerequisite to it becoming legally binding.

171. The Committee urges the Government to publish the Convention in the Official Gazette without delay, and to initiate necessary legislative action to make the Convention enforceable in courts. The Committee further calls on the Government to undertake a review of all existing legislation to bring it fully into compliance with the amended Constitution and the Convention.

172. The Committee is concerned that Jordanian nationality law prevents a Jordanian woman from passing on her nationality to her children if her husband is not Jordanian. This is an anachronistic situation at a time when Jordan is making major strides in its economic and democratic development and when marriage between persons of different nationalities is increasingly common. It also notes with concern that Jordanian law prohibits women from concluding contracts in their own name, from travelling alone and from choosing their place of residence. It considers these limitations on the rights of women to be inconsistent with the legal status of women under the Jordanian Constitution and the Convention. The Committee notes with concern that Jordan has entered reservations to articles 9, paragraph 2, and 15, paragraph 4, which relate to these matters.

173. The Committee calls on the State party to revoke those laws and to withdraw its reservations to articles 9, paragraph 2, and 15, paragraph 4.

174. The Committee notes that a woman's right to choose a family name, a profession or an occupation and a woman's rights upon divorce and rights and responsibilities as a parent are not recognized in the Personal Status Code. It also notes with concern that Jordanian law recognizes the practice of polygamy.

175. The Committee calls upon the Government to amend the Personal Status Code to recognize women's rights to choice of family name and occupation, as well as their rights upon divorce and with regard to their responsibilities as parents. The Committee calls upon the Government to reconsider the law and policy on polygamy with a view to eliminating this practice in line with the Convention, the Constitution and evolving social relations in the country. It also recommends that the Government review its reservations to article 16, paragraph 1 (c), (d) and (g), with a view to their withdrawal.

176. The Committee notes with concern that violence against women is a critical issue.

177. The Committee recommends that the Government take the necessary legal and social measures, including awareness-raising, to effectively address the issue of violence against women.

178. The Committee expresses its concern that several provisions of the Penal Code continue to discriminate against women. In particular, the Committee is concerned that article 340 of the Penal Code excuses a man who kills or injures his wife or his female kin caught in the act of adultery.

179. The Committee urges the Government to provide all possible support for the speedy repeal of article 340 and to undertake awareness-raising activities that make "honour killings" socially and morally unacceptable. It also urges the Government to take steps that ensure the replacement of protective custody with other types of protection for women.

180. The Committee expresses its concern that the prohibition of abortion also applies to cases where pregnancy is due to rape or incest.

181. The Committee calls on the Government to initiate legislative action to permit safe abortion for victims of rape and incest.

182. The Committee is concerned at the very low representation of women in elected and appointed office. In particular, the Committee is concerned that there are no women in Parliament and few women are office holders in rural and municipal councils. While it welcomes the fact that, for the first time, a woman holds the post of Deputy Prime Minister, it is concerned that women hold a small percentage of ministerial positions.

183. The Committee urges the Government to work with political parties, unions and other stakeholders to increase the number of women elected and appointed to political office and decision-making positions. In particular, it encourages the Government to take temporary special measures, including the introduction of quotas, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to remedy the low representation of women in the political sphere.

184. The Committee is concerned that women make up only 13.6 per cent of the paid labour force, a situation that appears to be largely due to social constraints rather than discriminatory legislation. It is concerned that restrictive employment legislation in the area of night work and regulations on jobs banned to women reinforce women's difficulties in obtaining paid employment. The Committee is concerned that although Jordan has ratified ILO Convention No. 100 on equal pay for work of equal value, there continues to be a wage gap to women's disadvantage. The Committee is concerned at the difference in entitlement to maternity leave in the public and private sectors.

185. The Committee calls on the Government to review its legislation and policy in the employment sector to facilitate full implementation of article 11 of the Convention. It calls on the Government to review ILO recommendations concerning maternity leave, to adapt its national situation to these recommendations and to consider coverage of such leave through social insurance schemes in order to prevent private employers from discriminating against women in recruitment.

186. While commending the work done by the National Commission for Women, the Committee is concerned at the lack of decision-making and enforcement power of the Commission. It also notes with concern that the National Commission was established by decree rather than by law.

187. The Committee recommends that the Government consider strengthening the National Commission for Women by placing its existence on a legislative basis, by strengthening its decision-making and enforcement powers and by providing adequate human and financial resources. It also recommends that this mechanism be given the mandate to receive complaints about discrimination.

188. The Committee expresses its concern that, notwithstanding the important role of rural women in Jordan and government efforts to provide education and extension services, they continue to be marginalized in agriculture.

189. The Committee calls on the Government to ensure that special measures are in place to support the full integration of rural women in national development.

190. The Committee urges the Government to ratify as soon as possible the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

191. The Committee also urges the Governor to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention as soon as possible.

192. The Committee requests the Government to respond to the concerns expressed in these concluding comments in its next report.

193. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Jordan of the current concluding comments in order to make the people, in particular government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality of women as well as of further steps that are required in this regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

3. Initial report and second and third periodic reports

Democratic Republic of the Congo

194. The Committee considered the initial report and the second and third periodic reports of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (CEDAW/C/ZAR/1, 2 and 2/Add.1 and Corr.1 and CEDAW/C/COD/1) at its 454th, 455th and 463rd meetings, on 25 and 31 January 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.454, 455 and 463).

Introduction by the State party

195. The Minister of Social Affairs and the Family of the Democratic Republic of the Congo noted that her country attached great importance to the issue of the advancement of women, despite the current difficult situation her country was facing. She recalled that after becoming a sovereign nation in 1960 her country experienced a dictatorial regime from 1965 to 1990 and that mismanagement during that time was the cause of various difficulties. A transition period began in 1991, when the National Sovereign Conference adopted the Constitutional Act. In 1994, civil unrest in Rwanda triggered mass displacement of refugees to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, since August 1998, armed conflict had further aggravated the situation. As a result, the socio-economic situation, already hampered by the impact of economic globalization, had further deteriorated and the population, and women in particular, had experienced growing insecurities and poverty.

196. The representative referred to the legal framework for the protection of human rights. She noted that her country had ratified international treaties to promote the human rights of women and children without reservations. Structures to define policies and programmes to promote the rights of women and families had been established, including the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Family, the General Secretary for the Family, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Human Rights and national and provincial councils on women and children. Significant efforts had been made to implement the recommendations arising from regional and global conferences on women, including the Fourth World Conference on Women, in which the Democratic Republic of the Congo had participated.

197. Although the fundamental principle of equality between men and women was enshrined in the Constitution, discrimination against women still prevailed, owing to traditional mentalities and negative customs. The representative emphasized that certain laws contradicted that provision of the Constitution, notably, article 448 of the Family Code, which still denied legal rights to married women. Discrimination also existed in the areas of pensions and in the Penal Code, which established more severe penalties for women who committed adultery than for men. The right to ownership of land was granted to all, without distinction. However, discriminatory attitudes and customs persisted, particularly in the rural areas, and women did not take advantage of their right to land.

198. A national forum on the rights and leadership of women was organized in 1996 to sensitize women with regard to their rights and to elaborate a plan of action. The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Family, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, had modified discriminatory provisions and conducted sensitization campaigns on women's human rights and on violence against the girl child and women. The Government had established a national programme for the advancement of women, which aimed to strengthen the economic power of women, to improve their legal and social status, formal education, health and access to economic resources, to provide assistance to rural women and to eliminate customs that negatively affected women.

199. The representative emphasized that the Government, through the Ministry of Information, had made special efforts to raise public awareness concerning the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other instruments related to human rights. Private television companies, journals and magazines, as well as churches and non-governmental organizations, had also

publicized the Convention. With the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Convention was now being translated into national languages.

200. Stereotypes about the role of women affected them from early girlhood. Since the creation of the Ministry of Advancement of Women in 1980, several awareness-raising campaigns had been organized to promote a more positive image of the role of women in society and in the family. A study on customary laws and the rights of women had been conducted by the Ministry of Advancement of Women and non-governmental organizations to develop strategies to eliminate all harmful customs and practices.

201. The representative noted that the majority of Congolese women remained illiterate and that literacy programmes had been initiated, targeting girls who dropped out of school and older women. Despite the right of all children to education without distinction based on sex, race, age and social class, the rate of young girls leaving school was very high, especially in the rural areas. Efforts were being made by the National Forum on the Rights and Leadership of Congolese Women, in partnership with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and churches, to increase the enrolment rate of young girls in secondary education.

202. The representative informed the Committee that Congolese women had been victims of physical, psychological and moral violence, but that much of this was unreported and undocumented. Young girls also suffered from various types of sexual violence, including rape and female genital mutilation. In the past several years, awareness-raising campaigns concerning violence against women had been organized by non-governmental organizations in collaboration with the Government. A study had been conducted in October 1999 by the Ministry of Advancement of Women and non-governmental organizations to provide a basis for strategies to address violence against women.

203. In concluding, the representative stated that, despite the difficulties being experienced by the country, her Government was making every effort to eliminate discrimination against women and improve the condition of women's lives, including through the establishment of a national machinery for the advancement of women, the elimination of discrimination through the draft constitution, the adoption of a gender approach in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all development projects and the elaboration of a national programme for the promotion of Congolese women. She emphasized, however, that even if all commitments were fulfilled, they would have little effect in the absence of peace.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

204. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for ratifying the Convention in 1985 without reservations and for submitting its initial report and second and third periodic reports, together with additional information in 1999 to update these reports, at a most difficult time for the State party.

205. The Committee also expresses its appreciation to the Congolese Government for sending a large delegation headed by the Minister for Social Affairs and the Family, who had made an excellent oral presentation. The Committee appreciates the open-minded attitude with which the report was presented; furthermore, the responses to the questions contributed to the constructive dialogue that took place between the State party and the Committee, leading to a better understanding of the situation of Congolese women.

Positive aspects

206. The Committee commends the efforts of the Congolese Government to continue to implement the Convention despite the ongoing war and the economic crisis.

207. The Committee notes with satisfaction that despite the prevailing difficult situation, a ministry has been set up to deal with matters concerning equality between men and women. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the National Women's Council, which is responsible for ensuring that a gender-specific approach is integrated into development programmes, and in particular its plan of action, which incorporates the Beijing and Cairo Programmes of Action.

208. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government for cooperating with non-governmental organizations and, in this regard, hopes that the

relations that they have established with the State will help to speed up the peace process in the country.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

209. One of the main obstacles to the full implementation of the Convention is the current war. The Committee recognizes that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been facing economic, social and political problems related to the war, which have had a negative impact on the whole population, particularly on girls and women, who are often victims of rape and gender-based violence, and on most refugees and displaced persons, who are experiencing great hardship. The situation is also being aggravated by growing inflation, which has eroded the quality of life of millions of women who do not have enough resources to survive.

210. The Committee notes that the persistence of prejudices and stereotyped behaviours with respect to the role of women and men in the family and society, based on the idea of male superiority and the consequent subordination of women to men, is a serious obstacle to the implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

211. The Committee notes with concern that despite some legislative gains, the Family Code, the Penal Code and the Labour Code still contain discriminatory provisions.

212. The Committee recommends that the Government give the highest priority to the adoption of legislation to protect the de jure and de facto equality of women, and to the enforcement of this legislation.

213. The Committee is concerned at the fact that the national machinery and the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Family do not have adequate resources to implement their plan of action.

214. The Committee encourages the Government to find the necessary resources to entrench the principle of gender equality, particularly ensuring the equal participation of women and men at all levels of decision-making.

215. The Committee is concerned at the persistence of traditional customs and practices, which are in violation of women's fundamental rights, such as dowry, the levirate, polygamy, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

216. The Committee urges the Government to enact legislation to prohibit such practices. It also recommends that the Government work with non-governmental organizations and the media to change attitudes through information and awareness-raising campaigns, the teaching of the Convention in schools and the translation of the Convention into local languages so as to accelerate women's enjoyment of their human rights.

217. The Committee is gravely concerned about the reports of women who were raped, assaulted or severely tortured during the war. It is also concerned about the situation of refugee and displaced women suffering from the consequences of war and at the psychological and mental trauma experienced by women and girls as a result of the forced conscription of children.

218. The Committee recommends that the Government adopt specific and structural measures, including legislation to protect women from such acts and provide to women victims of violence psychosocial support and socio-economic integration measures. It also requests the Government to introduce awareness-raising measures to emphasize the importance of maintaining human rights standards in times of war. It calls on the Government to ensure that children are not recruited as soldiers.

219. The Committee is concerned about the extent of prostitution, often resulting from poverty, and particularly prostitution of girl children.

220. The Committee urges the Government to adopt and enforce laws that prohibit the prostitution of girl children as well as to introduce appropriate measures for the social rehabilitation of prostitutes and to ensure that psycho-educational services are provided, in particular to these very young prostitutes. In addition, in view of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, full attention must be paid to the provision of health services for prostitutes.

221. The Committee is concerned about the under-representation of women in political life and in the governing bodies of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including those of the judicial system, and stresses the importance of a social and political

environment conducive to improving the situation of women in all sectors of public life and in private life.

222. The Committee recommends the adoption of temporary special measures with specific objectives, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

223. Notwithstanding the efforts made by the Government in the sphere of education, the Committee remains deeply concerned about the low rate of school enrolment of girls, their high drop-out rate and also the high female illiteracy rate, especially in rural areas.

224. The Committee encourages the Government to step up its efforts by establishing specific programmes to reduce female illiteracy and promote the access of girls to secondary schools. The Government should also envisage the provision of free primary education.

225. The Committee is concerned about de jure and de facto discrimination against women with regard to the right to work, particularly the requirement of the husband's authorization of a wife's paid employment and reduction of pay during maternity leave.

226. The Committee urges the Government to amend discriminatory laws in the sphere of employment in accordance with article 11 of the Convention.

227. The Committee notes with deep concern the high rates of maternal and infant mortality, the low rate of contraceptive use, particularly in rural areas, and the decline in health services.

228. The Committee calls upon the Government to make efforts to improve the use of contraceptive methods, to repeal article 178 of the Penal Code, which prohibits the dissemination of contraceptive methods, and to provide sex education for young people.

229. The Committee requests that the Government promote the improvement of health services for women throughout their life cycle, taking into account the Committee's general recommendation 24 on women and health.

230. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, who constitute the majority of the population. In addition, customs and beliefs are most broadly accepted and followed in rural areas, preventing women from inheriting or gaining ownership of land and property.

231. The Committee urges the Government to pay the greatest attention to the needs of rural women and to ensure that they benefit from the policies and programmes adopted in all spheres, including recognition of their status as agricultural employees who should benefit from the rights accorded by labour law. Rural women's equal participation in decision-making, and access to health services and credit should be ensured. The Committee recommends that more studies be undertaken on the situation of rural women and that more statistical data be collected to provide guidelines for policies in this sphere.

232. The Committee expresses concern about food taboos, which are not only detrimental to the health of women, especially mothers, but also have serious consequences for the health of future generations. The Committee recommends that the Government address the issue of eliminating food taboos by raising awareness about their detrimental effects on the health of women.

233. The Committee regrets that the reports do not fully abide by its guidelines on the form and content of initial and periodic reports and do not take into account its general recommendations.

234. The Committee requests that, in preparing its next report, the Democratic Republic of the Congo take into account the Committee's guidelines and general recommendations.

235. The Committee encourages the Democratic Republic of the Congo to deposit its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

236. The Committee urges the Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

237. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next report to the specific issues raised in its concluding comments.

238. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the present concluding comments in order to make the Congolese people, and particularly administrators and politicians, aware of the steps to be taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women, and the further steps required in that regard. The Committee also requests the Government to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the

Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.

4. Combined second and third periodic reports

Burkina Faso

239. The Committee considered the combined second and third periodic reports of Burkina Faso (CEDAW/C/BFA/2-3) at its 458th and 459th meetings, on 27 January 1999 (see CEDAW/C/SR.458 and 459).

Introduction by the State party

240. The representative of Burkina Faso informed the Committee that since ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1984, the Government had formulated new policies and legislation on the equality of rights of both spouses and children, women's access to land ownership, income-generating programmes and employment-support initiatives for women. She noted that the ratification of the Convention and the Optional Protocol was incorporated into the country's struggle for development and she expressed gratitude to the United Nations for initiatives to promote women's empowerment.

241. The representative informed the Committee that women in her country faced sociocultural and economic discrimination, particularly in the rural areas where 84.6 per cent of the population lived and where deeply-rooted traditions and customs shaped daily life. The representative drew attention to the extreme poverty of 44.4 per cent of the population, a majority of them women, and the slim possibilities they had to participate in major economic enterprises. She noted that inequality between women and men resulted from poverty, illiteracy, traditional norms and stereotypes nurtured by the patriarchal system.

242. The representative indicated that, despite efforts to promote and improve the situation of women, challenges remained. The maternal mortality rate was very high (531 per 100,000 live births), as was the fertility rate, and contraceptive use was low. In addition, the majority of the population was under 18 years of age.

243. Taking into consideration the high levels of illiteracy (in rural areas the female literacy rate was 5 per cent, compared to 15.5 per cent for men) and the persisting bias against educating girls, a national plan for the education of girls had been developed and the goal of reducing the gap between the educational levels of girls and boys by one third had been established. Public funds for education had been increased, teachers recruited, school infrastructures constructed and special programmes and incentives to support girls' education introduced. In addition, 50 per cent of the students in newly established satellite schools had to be girls.

244. The representative informed the Committee that maternal and child health programmes had been revised and a multisectoral plan to address HIV/AIDS had been introduced. Training programmes for medical personnel to assist older people had also been developed. Insufficient health coverage in rural areas and lack of resources and of qualified health personnel hampered the decentralization of health services, while reproductive health services did not take the needs of groups such as men and adolescent girls and boys into account.

245. The representative drew attention to the different forms of violence, including physical and psychological violence, perpetrated by men against women in vulnerable situations. Steps had been taken to eradicate traditional harmful practices against women, particularly prevalent in the rural areas. Female genital mutilation had been prohibited by the Penal Code in 1996, which established severe punishments for perpetrators of all forms of genital mutilation. The practice of levirate had been prohibited by the Individual and Family Code, while legislation existed with regard to rape, adultery and polygamy.

246. Despite specific legislation on agrarian reform, which established equality of women and men with regard to access to land, traditional inheritance practices weakened women's security and access to land that they customarily owned. The Government was committed to elaborating adequate legislation to promote the upward economic mobility and development of rural women. Such women had access to training, material and agrarian extension services. Many of the projects were supported by international and bilateral donor countries.

247. The representative informed the Committee that credit was available to women through savings and

credit banks. A Support Fund for Women's Gainful Activities had been established in 1990, but obstacles persisted with respect to women's access to finance, including lack of information with regard to credit opportunities and the disapproval expressed by husbands of the economic and entrepreneurial activities of their wives. The representative added that legislation had been enacted in 1998 to ensure equal access to employment and equal income for women and men in the public sector.

248. The representative drew attention to the fact that, in spite of deeply rooted sociocultural practices, illiteracy and the social division of labour that prevented women's empowerment, the Government of Burkina Faso had been able to promote women to public decision-making posts. Since the presentation of the initial report, the number of women ministers, deputies, members of parliament and ambassadors had considerably increased. The representative highlighted strategies and policies that had been adopted to promote women to decision-making posts in the public and private sectors and noted that the national plan of action included the social mobilization of different sectors, encompassing political parties, ministries, non-governmental organizations and civil society, so as to ensure the portrayal of a positive image of women.

249. The representative described the establishment of coordination structures, institutional mechanisms and information and research centres for the promotion of women, and the introduction of focal points in various ministries, which were all part of efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies, programmes and public life.

250. In conclusion, the representative noted that the Government had introduced specific measures to assist particularly vulnerable women, such as women with disabilities, prostitutes, older women and women victims of violence. Measures included policies to prevent discrimination and trafficking in women and to increase the empowerment of women, through protective legislation and economic and social programmes.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

251. The Committee commends the Government of Burkina Faso on the excellent presentation of its second and third periodic reports and the objective analysis of the situation of women in Burkina Faso.

252. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Burkina Faso for sending a large, high-level delegation, headed by the Minister for the Advancement of Women. The Committee welcomes the fact that the delegation established a constructive, frank and sincere dialogue with the members of the Committee and provided, in its replies to the Committee's questions and in its oral statement, additional information and recent statistics concerning areas of concern to the Committee, namely, education, health and employment, particularly in rural areas.

253. The Committee applauds the Government of Burkina Faso for its steadfast political will and its determination to achieve progress in the status of women, despite a difficult socio-economic situation, and to explain the provisions of the Convention.

254. The Committee also commends the Government of Burkina Faso for having involved women's associations and non-governmental organizations in the preparation of its reports and for continuing to work in close collaboration with them.

255. The Committee applauds the Government for its expressed desire to ratify the Optional Protocol.

Positive aspects

256. The Committee commends the Government for having adopted new legal and institutional measures since the submission of the initial report in order to implement the Convention and fulfil its commitments vis-à-vis the international community. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the Individual and Family Code restores to women their fundamental rights and establishes the principles of equal consent to marriage, choice of residence of the spouses during the marriage and the right to succession for the surviving spouse. The Code also regulates the marriageable age and establishes monogamy as the legal form of marital union.

257. The Committee congratulates the Government on the fact that the 1991 Constitution recognizes the principle of equality and non-discrimination against women.

258. The Committee commends the Government on the fact that, as a result of the revision of the labour code in 1992, the principle of equality has been

confirmed and a definition of discrimination has been established.

259. The Committee notes that the May 1996 law on agrarian and land reorganization has accorded women the same rights and conditions of access to land as men.

260. The Committee welcomes the establishment in June 1997 of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, which demonstrates the Government's interest in the development of women's rights. The Committee also notes with satisfaction that the Ministry for the Advancement of Women has designated a focal point in all the ministries involved in the follow-up of national policies and programmes to benefit women in order to incorporate a gender-specific approach at the level of analysis and to evaluate the results achieved.

261. The Committee particularly commends the Government of Burkina Faso on the provisions and policies adopted in conjunction with all civil society to eradicate the practice of genital mutilation, which infringes on the right to personal security and the physical and moral integrity of girls and threatens their lives and health.

262. The Committee notes with satisfaction the promulgation of a provision in the penal code in 1996 which prohibits and punishes female genital mutilation.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

263. The Committee notes that the economic difficulties, resulting mainly from the scarcity of State resources and the discriminatory customary and traditional practices, which are still a heavy burden for the women of Burkina Faso, exacerbate the very high illiteracy rate and therefore hinder the implementation of the Convention.

264. The Committee also notes that all the human development indicators — particularly in rural areas — are among the lowest in the continent and constitute a serious obstacle to the implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

265. The Committee is concerned about the prevalence of discriminatory traditions and customs which accentuate stereotypes and resist all change. These social practices, attitudes and beliefs derive from an overwhelmingly rural population with low levels of literacy and are contributing to the delay in the advancement of women.

266. The Committee urges the Government to adopt all appropriate measures and policies to develop the sociocultural climate to the benefit of women. The Committee calls on the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, with the cooperation of non-governmental organizations, intellectuals, religious leaders and the media, to encourage a change in people's way of thinking and accelerate the process of the emancipation of women through law reform, information, education and communications, particularly in rural areas, so that a change takes place in women's view of themselves and society as a whole recognizes that the participation of women is necessary for the development of Burkina Faso.

267. The Committee is very concerned about the female illiteracy rate, particularly in rural areas, which is one of the highest in the world.

268. The Committee recommends that the Government accord priority to the education of girls and women, seeking international assistance, in order to ensure and promote universal enrolment of girls and preclude dropouts. It calls on the Government to allocate more financial and human resources to the education sector, to recruit more women teachers and to ensure that school textbooks no longer carry negative images of women.

269. The Committee also recommends that, in addition to formal education, the Government should focus its efforts on informal education and the campaign against illiteracy through programmes targeted at girls and women. The Committee urges the Government to take into account the importance of civic education for women and the family and the teaching of human rights throughout the school curriculum.

270. The Committee, while welcoming the State party's efforts to analyse and identify the various forms of violence against women, is concerned about the absence of legislative texts and policies which would specifically protect women who are victims of domestic and sexual violence.

271. The Committee recommends that the Government should take adequate legislative and structural measures and provide assistance to those women. The

Committee also recommends that, as in the case of the campaign to combat genital mutilation, education and awareness-raising activities on the phenomenon of violence within the family and sexual violence should be directed towards the police force, judges, health-care providers and the media, so that their efforts can be more effective. A legal education campaign directed at women is desirable, so that they are better aware of their rights.

272. The Committee is concerned about the low level of representation of women, particularly in elective bodies.

273. The Committee recommends that the State party implement temporary special measures set forth in article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and use a quota system in order to achieve a substantial improvement in the number of women in Parliament and increase their participation in political life and decision-making.

274. The Committee is particularly concerned about the precarious state of women's health, especially in rural areas. The high rates of maternal and infant mortality caused by infectious diseases and malnutrition result from the lack of local health-care centres and adequate health-care providers. The Committee notes with concern the lack of access for women to family planning services.

275. The Committee recommends that the Government pay particular attention to this problem in order to improve the indicators of women's health. It recommends that national reproductive health programmes be drawn up both for women and for girls in order to prevent early pregnancy and induced abortion.

276. The Committee recommends that the access of women to primary health services and drinking water be facilitated. It encourages the Government to integrate family planning services in primary health care so that women can have easier access to them. The Committee recommends that the State party organize awareness-raising and information activities for women about contraceptive measures and involve men in those activities. It also recommends that the State party review its legislation on abortion and provide for coverage by social security. The Committee further recommends that the female population be made aware of the risks and consequences of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

277. The Committee is concerned that, despite the law on agrarian and land reform, which establishes equality between men and women with regard to land, prejudices and customary rights are once again hindering the implementation of this law.

278. The Committee recommends that the State party encourage the services concerned to take into account the rights of women to property and to provide them with the necessary credit.

279. The Committee stresses, with concern, that although the laws prohibit all discrimination against women at the level of employment, men and women are segregated and differentiated at the time of recruitment and in the allocation of responsibilities, as well as in levels of remuneration.

280. The Committee recommends that, in both the public and the private sectors, the State party ensure strict respect for labour laws, and take measures to eliminate discrimination in employment.

281. The Committee notes that the Government has taken measures in the Individual and Family Code to place restrictions on the practice of polygamy, but it remains concerned that the great majority of women are unaware of these rules.

282. The Committee recommends that the Government work towards the elimination of the practice of polygamy. It recommends that it ensure enforcement of the Individual and Family Code and protect the rights of women. It also recommends that the Government embark on a comprehensive public effort, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, directed at both women and men, to change existing attitudes regarding polygamy, and in particular to educate women on their rights and how to avail themselves of these rights. The Committee also recommends that the Government take measures to protect the human rights of women who are already in polygamous unions.

283. The Committee urges the Government to deposit its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention relating to the time of meetings of the Committee.

284. The Committee also urges the Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention as soon as possible.

285. The Committee calls upon the Government of Burkina Faso to include information on the subjects of concern raised in these concluding comments in the next periodic report, which it is required to submit in accordance with article 18 of the Convention.

286. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Burkina Faso of the present concluding comments so that the people, and particularly administrators and politicians, are made aware of the steps to be taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women, and the further steps required in that regard. It also requests the Government to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.

5. Combined second and third periodic reports and fourth periodic reports

Germany

287. The Committee considered the combined second and third periodic reports and fourth periodic report of Germany (CEDAW/C/DEU/2-3 and 4) at its 464th and 465th meetings, on 1 February 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.464 and 465).

Introduction by the State party

288. The representative of Germany noted that the change in Government in September 1998 had led to new priorities in the country's equal rights policy. Ten years had passed since the reunification of Germany and since the presentation of its initial report, thus providing an occasion to assess developments of equal rights and equal opportunities in unified Germany. The transition from the economic and social system of the former German Democratic Republic to a system based on parliamentary democracy, federalism and the social market economy had entailed painful adjustments for the people living in the East. Women had often been severely affected by the negative effects of that process. Labour market and social policy measures had helped to soften the effects of the radical changes for women in the new *Länder* (states). Having enjoyed full employment prior to unification, women's unemployment rate in the new *Länder*, while declining, was still 20.7 per cent. New public and non-governmental institutions had also emerged, contributing to the improvement of women's overall social situation.

289. The representative underlined that on 10 December 1999, Germany had signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention. The ratification process would be initiated in 2000, together with acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention. In the light of the recent decision of the European Court of Justice on Germany's prohibition that women bear arms, Germany would assess its reservation to article 7, subparagraph (b) of the Convention.

290. In her presentation, the representative focused on two key priorities of the current Government's equal rights policy, namely the women and work programme and the action plan to combat violence against women. The women and work programme aimed at ensuring better use of women's skills in all sectors of society, to provide new impetus for equal opportunity at work and to promote equal participation in the workforce and society. While women were better educated than ever before and represented 42 per cent of all gainfully employed or self-employed persons, they continued to suffer inequalities in the distribution of family work and in the allocation of training places and jobs. Their wages remained below those of men, they held 90 per cent of all part-time jobs, were concentrated in few occupational groups and ranked lower in the business hierarchy.

291. Consequently, the women and work programme would address various areas to assist in implementing the Convention. A draft bill would be prepared to increase the number of women in the federal administration and in policy advisory bodies. The under-representation of women in management positions in German business and industry would be addressed through the elaboration of effective equal opportunity regulations for the private sector since voluntary action alone was not enough. A group of experts had been established to make recommendations that would gain wide acceptance and take into account the great diversity of companies. In order to address the still considerable differences in women's and men's wages, the Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth would submit a report on equal pay and the economic situation of women to the German Bundestag. The report would examine the primary causes of wage discrimination, which, due to the clear legal situation, was no longer the result of

direct wage discrimination against women. Measures to create opportunities for women in the expanding information technology sector would be undertaken, as would measures to encourage women's entrepreneurship. In cooperation with the *Lander*, efforts to improve equal opportunities for women in teaching and research would continue and a target of 20 per cent women holding professorships in institutions of higher education by the year 2005 had been set. Measures were planned to reconcile family and career through greater work flexibility for women and men, flexibility of child-raising leave, improvement of childcare institutions and the promotion of a new male image to help men fit into the role of equal sharers in family work and child-raising.

292. Turning to the action plan to combat violence against women, the representative pointed out that past measures, while leading to improvements in certain areas, had not brought about a real and sustained reduction in violence against women in German society. The current plan had been drawn up as a comprehensive overall concept, involving all authorities and non-governmental organizations dealing with violence against women. Since the plan applied to areas within the jurisdiction of the *Lander* and municipalities, a working group would be set up to foster cooperation between the federal Government and the *Lander*, with the inclusion of non-governmental organizations. The plan focused on a number of areas, including prevention, with attention to the particular situation of disabled women and girls, older women and foreign women and girls; legislation, with particular attention to improving the protection of women victims of domestic violence under civil law, combating sexual harassment in the workplace and fighting trafficking in women; cooperation among institutions and projects, with working groups being set up on trafficking in women and on domestic violence; nationwide networking of assistance services; work with offenders, in particular through rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators; awareness-building among experts and the public at large; and international cooperation.

293. The representative drew attention to several areas where progress had been made or where there was an acute need for action. A first comprehensive study had been commissioned to assess the health situation of German women. Rural women benefited from a number of projects to support structural change in rural regions. The sixth report on families had, for the first time, examined the situation of foreign families in Germany, and a representative study would be commissioned soon to assess the living situation and social integration of foreign women and girls. That report was expected to serve as a basis for further measures in this area. The entry into force of the new law on nationality on 1 January 2000 also benefited foreign women and their children.

294. In conclusion, the representative noted that the many initiatives undertaken by the current federal Government needed to be translated into practice in the coming years. They would further the achievement of real equality for women and men and serve to implement the Convention more effectively than in the past.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

295. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Germany for submitting a detailed combined second and third periodic report, as well as a fourth periodic report containing data disaggregated by sex, and following the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of periodic reports. It commends the Government for the comprehensive written replies to the Committee's questions and its oral presentation, which provided additional information on recent developments in the State party. It appreciates the open manner in which the State party shared with the Committee its analysis of the situation of women and identified areas for further progress.

296. The Committee commends the Government of Germany for having sent a large delegation with a broad range of expertise, which was headed by the Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Their participation enhanced the quality of the constructive dialogue between the State party and the Committee. The Committee notes that the reports also refer to steps taken by the Government to implement the Beijing Platform for Action.

Positive aspects

297. The Committee commends the Government on its commitment to achieving equal rights and equal opportunities for women, reflected in the progress

made in the implementation of the Convention since the consideration of the initial report in 1990. The Committee welcomes the steps taken by the Government following the reunification of Germany to support the many adjustments required from the people, especially the women, of the former German Democratic Republic in the transition to an economic and social system based on parliamentary democracy, federalism and the social market economy.

298. The Committee welcomes the amendment of article 3 of the Basic Law, which adds the commitment of the State to the promotion of women's de facto equality with men and the removal of existing disadvantages to the constitutional guarantee of equal rights of women and men.

299. The Committee commends the Government on its wide-ranging legislative and policy initiatives and the programmes and projects aimed at giving effect to the constitutional guarantee of equal rights of women and men. In particular, it welcomes the adoption of the second Equal Rights Act of 1994, the amendment of the Penal Law, making marital rape and sexual coercion a punishable offence, and the action plan to combat violence against women. It commends the Government on its women and work programme aimed at ensuring women's equal participation in all sectors of society. It welcomes the Government's extensive use of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, for the realization of de facto equality for women.

300. The Committee commends the Government on the recent advances made in the participation of women in the political sphere, particularly with respect to the representation of women in the Parliament.

301. The Committee commends the State party on the extensive network of institutional mechanisms at federal, state and local levels that support and promote the implementation of the country's equal rights policies. It appreciates the fact that resources for the Federal Ministry aimed at realizing equal opportunities for women have increased continuously between 1986 and 1997.

302. The Committee congratulates the State party for having signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention, on 10 December 1999, and welcomes its stated intention to initiate in 2000 the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol and the amendment of article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

303. The Committee notes that the Government, in assessing the implication of a decision of the European Court of Justice concerning the role of women in the German armed forces, will evaluate its reservation to article 7, subparagraph b, of the Convention.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

304. The Committee notes that there are no significant factors or difficulties that prevent the effective implementation of the Convention in Germany.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

305. The Committee, while noting the wealth of information concerning legislation, policy and specific measures designed to ensure compliance with the Convention, is nonetheless concerned at the general absence of assessment and evaluation of these initiatives.

306. The Committee urges the State party to place greater emphasis, in its next periodic report, on the assessment and evaluation of all measures taken to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of their lives, and to set time-frames within which it intends to achieve its goals.

307. The Committee is concerned that, although a series of measures has been adopted, the implementation of the Convention for women living in the new *Länder* continues to lag behind that with regard to those living in the old *Länder*. It is concerned that women in the new *Länder* used to enjoy full employment but now account for 20.7 per cent of the unemployed. That is a disproportionately high percentage compared to that of unemployed men in the new *Länder* as well as to the overall unemployment rate of women in Germany.

308. The Committee urges the Government to continue its targeted efforts to improve the situation of women in the new *Länder* in the area of work and employment, as well as their overall social well-being.

309. The Committee is concerned that the programmes, laws and policies introduced by the Government have failed to ensure that the Constitutional obligation to promote the

implementation of de facto equality for women is understood as a societal responsibility and achieved in practice.

310. The Committee urges the Government to take measures to ensure that public officials, including law enforcement officials, contribute to the realization of this principle in the entire territory of the country. It urges the Government to ensure that tertiary and continuing legal education of lawyers and the judiciary adequately covers the evolving understanding of equality and non-discrimination and international norms and standards in that regard. It also urges the Government to ensure the availability of effective domestic remedies and their accessibility to women, especially in the light of the pending entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention. It also encourages the Government to refer directly to the Convention in its legislative, policy and programmatic initiatives, since the Convention is legally binding and such use would increase awareness of the international commitments entered into by the State party.

311. The Committee expresses its concern at the continuing disadvantages women face in many aspects of work and the economy. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the persistence of the wage gap between women and men, notwithstanding women's high educational achievements, with women earning on average 77 per cent of men's earnings. It is concerned that, in 1997, although women accounted for 42.1 per cent of the gainfully employed population, they comprised 88 per cent of the persons working in part-time employment and 55.9 per cent of the unemployed. The Committee is concerned that those differences are indicative of the persistence of indirect discrimination against women in the labour market. It is also concerned that part-time work tends to be in low-skilled employment, offering fewer opportunities for professional advancement.

312. The Committee calls on the Government to ensure that the definition of discrimination contained in article 1 of the Convention, in particular the Convention's prohibition of indirect discrimination, is fully integrated into its legislation, especially its labour legislation. In this regard, it welcomes the Government's intention to prepare a report on equal pay which will examine the primary causes of wage discrimination. The Committee calls on the State party to examine existing formulae for the determination of equal work and work of equal value, with a view to developing guidelines or directives to assist the partners in collective wage bargaining in determining comparable wage structures in sectors dominated by women. The Committee urges the Government to monitor closely the impact of its new programme on women and work so as to ensure that it achieves its stated aims of advancing equal opportunities of women and men in the working world and in the family and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes.

313. The Committee expresses its concern at the persistence of stereotypical and traditional attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in private and in public life. The Committee notes that that persistence is reflected in women's predominance in part-time work, their main responsibility for family and caring work, occupational segregation, men's extremely low participation in parental leave, at 1.5 per cent of those taking parental leave in 1997, and the taxation of married couples. The Committee is concerned that measures aimed at the reconciliation of family and work entrench stereotypical expectations for women and men. In that regard, the Committee is concerned at the unmet need for kindergarten places for the 0-3 age group, that the proportion of all-day kindergartens was only 34.8 per cent in 1994 and that childcare centres were available for only 5.1 per cent of school-age children, especially since all-day schools are the exception in Germany.

314. The Committee urges the Government to study the impact of measures aimed at reconciliation of work and family responsibilities so as to create a firm basis for policies and programmes that will accelerate change and eradicate stereotypical attitudes. The Committee urges the State party to develop more programmes and policies targeted at men to accelerate the changing of attitudes and behaviour. It calls on the State party to consider the introduction of non-transferable parental leave for fathers to increase the number of men that share responsibility for childcare and child-rearing. It urges the Government to improve the availability of care places for school-age children to facilitate women's re-entry into the labour market. It also recommends that the State party assess the current legal provisions on the taxation of married couples ("splitting") and its impact on the perpetuation of stereotypical expectations for married women.

315. The Committee is concerned at the limited efforts and measures in place to extend women's equal rights and equal opportunities into the private sector.

316. The Committee calls on the Government to increase its legislative and regulatory efforts to ensure that women are protected against all forms of discrimination in the private sector and to increase measures aimed at achieving de facto equality. It also encourages the Government to intensify its interaction with the private sector, including through incentives and other non-legislative measures, as well as with unions and with women's organizations to achieve that goal.

317. The Committee is concerned at the often precarious social and economic situation of foreign women living in Germany. It is also concerned at the incidences of xenophobic and racist attacks in the State party and notes the vulnerabilities that foreign women can face on the multiple grounds of sex, ethnicity and race.

318. Noting the Government's intention to commission a study on the living situation and social integration of foreign women and girls, the Committee requests the Government to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the situation of foreign women, including their access to education and training, work and work-related benefits, health care and social protection, and to provide such information in its next report. The Committee calls on the Government to improve the collection of data and statistics disaggregated by sex and race/ethnicity of victims of violence motivated by xenophobia and racism, to put in place adequate protection mechanisms and to ensure that foreign women victims of such attacks are made aware of their rights and have access to effective remedies. It also urges the Government to strengthen its efforts for the social integration of foreign women through educational and employment services, and through awareness-raising of the population. It also recommends that steps be taken to combat domestic violence and violence within the family and to increase foreign women's awareness about the availability of legal remedies and means of social protection.

319. The Committee, while welcoming the Government's action plan on violence against women, is concerned at the remaining gaps in protecting women against violence in the family and in society.

320. The Committee urges the Government to ensure the systematic implementation of the plan and to monitor its impact in the areas of emphasis identified in the plan. In particular, the Committee recommends legislation and measures to ensure that women victims of domestic violence have immediate means of redress and protection. It also calls on the Government to take measures aimed at creating zero tolerance for such violence, and to make it socially and morally unacceptable. The Committee further recommends that measures be taken to sensitize the judiciary to all forms of violence against women that constitute infringements of the human rights of women under the Convention, particularly taking into account the increased vulnerability of foreign women to such violence.

321. The Committee is concerned at the incidence of trafficking in women and girls.

322. The Committee urges the Government to recognize that trafficked women are victims of human rights violations in need of protection and, accordingly, to provide assistance to them. It also urges the Government to increase efforts of cross-border and international cooperation, especially with countries of origin and transit, to reduce the incidence of trafficking and to prosecute traffickers. It calls on the Government to ensure that trafficked women have the support that they need so that they can provide testimony against their traffickers. It also urges that training of border police and law enforcement officials provide them with the requisite skills to recognize and provide support to victims of trafficking. It also recommends that the Government review its procedures for issuance of visas to dependent spouses, taking into consideration that such spouses may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

323. The Committee is concerned at the continuing stereotypical portrayal of women, especially of foreign women, in the media.

324. The Committee urges the Government to support the important role of the media in changing stereotypical attitudes to women. It recommends that opportunities be created for the portrayal of positive, non-traditional images of women and to encourage and facilitate the use of self-regulatory mechanisms in the media to reduce discriminatory and stereotypical portrayals of women.

325. The Committee is concerned that, although they are legally obliged to pay taxes, prostitutes still do not enjoy the protection of labour and social law.

326. The Committee recommends that the Government improve the legislative situation affecting these women

so as to render them less vulnerable to exploitation and increase their social protection.

327. Noting the Government's intention to amend the Aliens Act on the legal status of foreign spouses, the Committee is concerned at the situation of alien women seeking residence in the State party.

328. The Committee urges the Government to continue to improve the legislative and social protection of alien women, especially of women asylum seekers.

329. The Committee urges the Government to deposit its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention as soon as possible.

330. The Committee also urges the Government to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

331. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments.

332. The Committee also requests that the Government engage in a broad consultative process with women's non-governmental organizations, including those that represent foreign women, when preparing its next report.

333. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Germany of the present concluding comments in order to make the people of Germany, particularly government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women and the future steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

6. Third periodic reports

Belarus

334. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Belarus (CEDAW/C/BLR/3) at its 460th and 461st meetings, on 28 January 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.460 and 461).

Introduction by the State party

335. The representative of Belarus noted that since the submission of the second periodic report in 1992, significant changes had occurred for women in Belarus in the context of economic and social transition. She emphasized the positive impact in Belarus of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and her country's elaboration and implementation of a national action plan for the period 1996-2000. She also noted the importance of implementing the Convention and other international documents and addressing issues of equality between women and men and indicated that the Government intended to sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Particular attention had been given to the areas of labour, decision-making, family and social protection, health, education, prevailing gender stereotypes and violence against women. Nonetheless, many obstacles related to the transition, and the insufficient understanding of gender issues by society had hampered efforts to achieve full equality between women and men and the implementation of the Convention.

336. Many legislative and policy changes had occurred and new alliances had been forged or strengthened between the Government, local authorities, the Parliament, women's groups, civil society and international organizations. Centres offering training and curricula in gender and women's studies had been created. The collection of gender-sensitive information and data had improved and numerous publications, awareness-raising campaigns and seminars had contributed to greater visibility and better understanding of gender equality issues by the public.

337. Violence against women had been recognized as a social problem. The 1997 Penal Code addressed violence against women in all its forms and included provisions relating to the protection of victims, witnesses and their families. In 1998, the first women's crisis centre had been established and awareness-raising campaigns, the provision of information and the publication of studies had been initiated. A forthcoming criminal code would strengthen regulations and penalties in cases of trafficking in persons, violations of equal rights of citizens and all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and direct and indirect violence.

338. The representative stated that women's political participation at the highest decision-making levels

remained low, with 4.5 per cent women in the national Parliament, only one woman cabinet minister and two women ambassadors, despite the attention given to the issue by policy makers. She noted that women's participation at the higher levels of administration, management, the judiciary and in local parliaments had increased, with the number of women reaching 37 per cent on average.

339. The representative noted that the difficulties of transition, including declining living standards and increasing daily workloads, as well as the aftermath of the disaster in Chernobyl, had had a negative impact on the health status of women and children. However, health care and medical institutions in all areas had been strengthened, with particular attention being given to prenatal, childbirth and childcare-related services and the provision of medication. Advice to mothers, including awareness campaigns to promote breastfeeding, was also provided. A national plan focusing on reproductive health, including family planning, was being developed. Special legal regulations, policies and programmes had been instituted to provide assistance to the victims of the Chernobyl disaster, including medical advice to pregnant women and mothers.

340. The restructuring of the economy, changes in the labour market and budgetary cuts in the social sphere, combined with the prevailing unequal distribution of domestic tasks between women and men, had been having a negative impact on women, who were among the most vulnerable social groups. There were cases when women were the first to be fired and the last to be hired in the changing labour market. Living standards, in particular for single mothers, women in low-income families, women with disabilities and elderly women, had decreased. Training courses in non-traditional areas such as management, marketing and auditing had been introduced to redress these factors and women also received financial and in-kind assistance. Newly created jobs often included quotas for women and vulnerable groups and women occupied more than half of the 20,000 work places created in 1999. Special protective provisions were in place for pregnant women workers, women with children below 3 years of age and single mothers with children between the ages of 3 and 14. Cases of discrimination against female workers and of non-compliance with labour regulations by employers had been addressed through conciliatory means, or — in one third of the cases — in the courts.

341. The economic and social transition had been particularly difficult for rural women, whose living conditions, in general, were more difficult than those of women living in urban areas. Rural women's share of unremunerated work at home and on the farm was higher. Despite efforts to modernize agriculture and village infrastructures and to ensure proper educational, health and social services to women, progress remained insufficient.

342. Increased attention had been paid to women's roles as mothers and to the family and its needs, so as to increase its protection. Changes in legislation had brought assistance to families, in particular to single mothers with children. These included: additional financial resources for single mothers with a child below 18 months of age or a disabled child below 16 years; and assistance in kind to families with children with special needs, families with numerous children and children with HIV/AIDS. In view of the high rate of divorce affecting one family in two, the diminishing number of marriages and high number of orphans, legislative and policy measures had also addressed the needs of young families, education for family life, reconciliation of work and family life, social support services, human rights, including women's and children's rights, and the situation of orphans. Family-oriented policies, however, had been criticized by some feminist groups on the grounds that they overemphasized women's traditional roles in the family and weakened their position in the labour market, rather than supporting equal division of responsibilities between women and men in all spheres of life.

343. The representative informed the Committee that the creation of national machinery for the advancement of women had been recognized as a critical element for the implementation of gender and women-specific programmes and for meeting international commitments. The representative acknowledged that while Belarus still lacked sufficient financial resources, skills and public awareness to create fully functioning machinery, elements were currently in place in various sectors of the Government and in Parliament. They were responsible for data collection, development of indicators, monitoring the implementation of governmental policies and the elaboration of measures of assistance for women and children.

344. Among the practical steps taken by the Government to improve the situation of women were special programmes for gender education, practical

activities for the elimination of violence against women, as well as close cooperation with UNDP, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations in the field of gender issues.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

345. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Belarus for submitting its third periodic report, which follows the Committee's guidelines and provided data disaggregated by sex. It notes the Government's efforts to provide written replies to the Committee's questions, which provided additional information on the current situation of women in Belarus and the status of implementation of the Convention and of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

346. The Committee commends the Government of Belarus for having sent a delegation headed by the Deputy Minister of Justice and including officials from the national machinery for the advancement of women. The Committee welcomes the open and constructive dialogue established between the State party and the Committee, which enabled the Committee to obtain a better understanding of the present situation of women in Belarus.

Positive aspects

347. The Committee commends the Government for the adoption, in 1996, of a national plan of action to improve the situation of women for the period 1996-2000 and of a national programme entitled "Women of the Republic of Belarus".

348. The Committee welcomes the efforts made to establish a national machinery for the advancement of women and to achieve equality between women and men. It appreciates the work undertaken by the Administration of Family and Gender Issues Section of the Ministry of Social Welfare and by the Centre for Gender Information and Policy, which has been created within the framework of a project on women in the development process.

349. The Committee commends the Government for recognizing violence against women as a societal problem and for initiating legislation, establishing a crisis centre for victims of sexual and domestic violence and starting awareness-raising activities. It also commends the Government for recognizing trafficking in women as an emerging problem requiring sustained attention.

350. The Committee notes that human rights education has been introduced into curricula, including teaching on the human rights of women. It also notes that gender education is being introduced at tertiary educational institutions.

351. The Committee commends the Government for recognizing the difficult economic situation women face in Belarus, in particular with regard to women's employment and the incidence of poverty among women. It also commends the efforts undertaken by the Government to alleviate the situation.

352. The Committee notes the Government's attempts to deal with the health impact of the Chernobyl disaster.

353. The Committee welcomes the Government's intention to sign, at an early date, the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

354. The Committee considers that the negative effects of the ongoing transition of the country to a market-based economy and the resulting levels of women's unemployment and poverty are major impediments to the full implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

355. The Committee is concerned that the absence of an enabling environment in the country prevents women from fully participating in all aspects of public life in accordance with articles 3, 7 and 8 of the Convention. The Committee is in particular concerned at the small number of women holding political and decision-making positions.

356. The Committee recommends that the Government take all necessary steps to ensure an open and enabling environment where women have equal opportunity to express their opinions and to participate equally in all aspects of the political process and in civil society organizations. The Committee notes that such an environment is necessary for the advancement of women and the full implementation of the Convention.

357. The Committee expresses its concern that no unified State policy is in place to eliminate discrimination against women and achieve equality between women and men. In particular, the Committee notes with concern that the Government predominantly uses an approach of service delivery to women rather than a human rights approach when implementing the Convention. In addition, such an approach emphasizes the protection of and the delivery of services to women mainly as mothers and members of families, thus perpetuating stereotypical attitudes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women.

358. The Committee urges the Government to reassess its overall policy towards women in a manner that recognizes women as individuals entitled to the realization of their human rights in accordance with the Convention. It calls on the Government, in its new national action plan to improve the situation of women in Belarus 2001-2005, to take a human-rights-oriented approach. It also urges the Government to ensure that its gender equality efforts target men as well as women.

359. The Committee expresses its concern that the country's legislation, in particular with regard to women's role in the labour market, appears to be overly protective of women as mothers and thus creates further obstacles to women's participation in the labour market.

360. The Committee calls on the Government to undertake a comprehensive legislative review so as to ensure that the full meaning of article 1 of the Convention is reflected in the country's Constitution and legislation. The Committee further urges the Government to create adequate remedies for women to obtain easy redress from direct and indirect discrimination, especially in the area of employment. It also calls on the Government to improve women's access to such remedies, including access to courts, by facilitating legal aid to women and embarking on legal literacy campaigns.

361. The Committee is concerned by the continuing prevalence of sex-role stereotypes and by the reintroduction of such symbols as a Mothers' Day and a Mothers' Award, which it sees as encouraging women's traditional roles. It is also concerned whether the introduction of human rights and gender education aimed at countering such stereotyping is being effectively implemented.

362. The Committee recommends the training of teachers to strengthen capacity for human rights education in schools. It also recommends monitoring human rights education and gender studies with regard to the number of educational establishments offering such education, and also the impact of such education.

363. The Committee is concerned at the limited capacity of the national machinery to develop and support the implementation of a national gender equality policy to accelerate the implementation of the Convention.

364. The Committee urges the Government to strengthen the status, the human and financial resources as well as the capacity of the national machinery to gather and analyse data and information and to develop legislative and policy proposals in all areas covered by the Convention.

365. The Committee is concerned at the economic situation of women, which is characterized by poverty and unemployment, displacement of women from the labour market and even from sectors previously dominated by women. The Committee also notes with concern that re-employed women hold positions below their levels of education and skills. The Committee is also concerned that women are employed predominantly in low-paying jobs and that a wage gap between women and men persists. The Committee expresses its concern at the economic situation of particularly vulnerable groups of women, such as those with sole responsibility for families, older women and women with disabilities.

366. The Committee urges the Government to establish a legislative basis that ensures women equal access to the labour market and equal opportunities to work and to create protection against direct and indirect discrimination with regard to access and opportunities. It calls on the Government to implement unemployment policies targeted at women. In particular, it recommends measures to facilitate women's entry into growth sectors of the economy rather than into traditionally female-dominated employment. It calls on the Government to support women's entrepreneurship through the creation of a conducive legislative and regulatory environment and access to loans and credit.

367. The Committee is concerned that poverty is widespread among women.

368. The Committee calls on the Government to collect data and information on women living in poverty, disaggregated by age and according to urban and rural areas, to develop targeted policies and support services, and make efforts to prevent more women from falling below the poverty line.

369. The Committee is concerned that, although some efforts have been made, there is no holistic approach to preventing and eliminating violence against women, and punishing perpetrators.

370. The Committee calls on the Government to assess the impact of measures already taken to address the incidence of violence against women. It recommends addressing the root causes of violence against women, especially domestic violence, so as to improve the effectiveness of legislation, policies and programmes aimed at combating such violence. It also recommends that the legislation on violence against women be reviewed and strengthened. It further recommends that the Government put in place immediate means of redress and increase psychological counselling for victims, including for those women who are serving prison sentences. The Committee urges the Government to implement training and sensitization programmes for the judiciary, law enforcement officials and members of the legal profession, as well as awareness-raising measures to create zero tolerance in society with regard to violence against women.

371. The Committee expresses its concern about the increasing trend in trafficking for purposes of prostitution of Belarusian women, often under false pretences.

372. The Committee encourages the Government to increase its efforts, including through international and cross-border cooperation with recipient and transit countries, to prevent trafficking in women, attack its root causes through poverty alleviation and assist its victims through efforts of counselling and reintegration.

373. The Committee expresses its concern with regard to women's health throughout the life cycle.

374. The Committee urges the Government to maintain adequate and affordable physical and mental health services for women throughout their life cycle, including for older women. In particular, the Committee urges the Government to increase affordable contraceptive choices for women and men so as to increase the use of contraception. It also urges the Government to review its occupational health and safety legislation and standards, with a view to reducing protective standards, which often have a discriminatory effect on women in general and pregnant women in particular. It further recommends the collection of data on illnesses affecting women more than men and the monitoring of HIV/AIDS prevalence among women. The Committee also recommends further efforts by the Government to address the effects on women and children of the Chernobyl disaster, availing itself of international humanitarian assistance.

375. The Committee encourages the Government to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

376. The Committee encourages the Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

377. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments. It also requests the Government to improve the collection and analysis of data and statistics disaggregated by sex and age in the areas of poverty and violence against women, and relating to articles 10, 11, 12 and 14 of the Convention, and to provide them in the next report. It further requests the Government, in its next report, to provide an assessment of the impact of measures taken to implement the Convention.

378. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Belarus of the present concluding comments, in order to make the people of Belarus, particularly Government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women and the future steps required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Luxembourg

379. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Luxembourg (CEDAW/C/LUX/3 and Add.1)

at its 446th and 447th meetings, on 17 January 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.446 and 447).

Introduction by the State party

380. The representative of Luxembourg drew attention to follow-up steps taken after the Committee's consideration of the second periodic report in 1997, which included wide distribution of the concluding comments, a discussion on equality between women and men in relation to the Committee's recommendations in the Parliamentary Commission on Equality of Opportunity Between Women and Men and on the Advancement of Women of the Chamber of Deputies and press coverage. The National Council of Women of Luxembourg endorsed the recommendations of the Committee and underlined the importance of this international monitoring mechanism for achieving progress in the status of women in Luxembourg.

381. The Government had adopted an action plan 2000 for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Ministry for the Advancement of Women had reissued its publication entitled "Equal rights for girls and boys, for women and men", covering the Convention and actions to implement it in Luxembourg. The collection of statistics disaggregated by sex had also been improved.

382. The representative stressed the importance of maintaining the current institutional mechanism for the implementation of policies for the advancement of women and for gender equality in order to guarantee implementation of the Convention, as called for in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. Since the creation of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women in 1995, the Government of Luxembourg had pursued an active policy for the promotion of women's equality. The new coalition Government, in power since August 1999, accorded priority to a policy of promotion of the status of women. There were four women ministers in the new Government, out of a total of 14 ministers. The budget of the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, while small, had increased by 33.75 per cent in five years, and the Ministry supported the recent proposal made by the National Council of Women of Luxembourg to conduct a gender analysis of the entire budget of the Government.

383. With regard to Luxembourg's two reservations to the Convention, the representative noted that the Government remained committed to working towards their withdrawal. The Government's proposal to amend article 3 of the Constitution on the hereditary transmission of the crown, which is supported by the Grand Duke, is still being pursued. The representative did not foresee any action during the current legislative period on the reservation to article 16 on the choice of a child's surname; the existing legislation did not include any provision on the question of imposing another family name. The practice of children carrying their fathers' names was strongly rooted in the culture of the country.

384. The representative underlined the Government's support for the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which it had signed on 10 December 1999, and hoped to be among the first to ratify.

385. The representative drew attention to the Government's policy of consciousness-raising concerning the changing roles and responsibilities of women and men. Among actions taken was a project on "sharing equality", which had developed a pedagogic gender approach. A working group was preparing a project to integrate gender equality aspects into all basic and continuing education curricula. Teaching and training materials and manuals had also been developed, and activities of non-governmental organizations had been supported. A second strategic focus was the integration of a gender perspective into all policies, with an emphasis on legislation. Since September 1998, all legislation must be accompanied by a statement on its impact on equality of opportunity. The introduction of non-transferable parental leave as of 1 January 1999 was an example of legislative action aimed at changing roles.

386. The representative noted that women make up 37 per cent of the economically active population, with frontier workers from neighbouring countries constituting about one third of the female labour force. The traditional family, with the father being the head of the household and working outside the home and the mother responsible for the home and social relations, remained well anchored in Luxembourg society. At the same time, there was growing demand for improved childcare and continuing education, especially from women under 45 years of age who intended to leave the job market only temporarily for family responsibilities. Legislation had been adopted that created the basis for positive action for women in the private sector and the Ministry had supported several projects in this area. Gender equality officers were now mandatory in the

private sector and revision of the Civil Service Statute was planned, with a view to introducing positive action in the public sector. The current coalition Government had declared itself against the introduction of quotas on electoral lists.

387. The representative indicated that 1999 had been designated the national year against violence against women, during which extensive public awareness campaigns had been implemented to sensitize the public to the issue of domestic and marital violence. Training would continue to be offered for service providers in women's shelters, legislation on domestic violence would be further reviewed, and the experience of other countries with such legislation would be studied to sensitize further various ministries and the judiciary to this issue. Action on a law against sexual harassment in the workplace was expected.

388. A special commission on women had been created within the National Commission on Foreigners to better integrate foreign women into society. The results of this initiative would be presented in the next report.

389. In conclusion, the representative acknowledged that further progress was necessary in all areas to change traditions and cultural attitudes on the roles and responsibilities of men. Efforts were needed to ensure the participation of men in changing gender relations and to achieve equality between women and men. In this context, Luxembourg had proposed to organize a conference on "Men and power". The representative also expressed the hope that the General Assembly, at its twenty-third special session, in June 2000, in conducting its five-year review of the outcome of and follow-up to the Beijing Conference, would deal with this issue.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

390. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Luxembourg for submitting a detailed third periodic report containing data disaggregated by sex. It commends the Government for the comprehensive written replies to the Committee's questions and its oral presentation that further clarified recent developments and Government policy in the State party. It appreciates the frank and open manner in which the report was prepared and presented, and the fact that the views of non-governmental organizations had been sought for the report.

391. The Committee commends the Government of Luxembourg for sending a high-level delegation, headed by the Minister for the Advancement of Women. The Committee notes that the report and the replies refer to steps taken by the Government to implement the Beijing Platform for Action.

Positive aspects

392. The Committee commends the Government for the wide dissemination of the Convention and of the concluding comments adopted by the Committee following consideration of the State party's second periodic report in 1997. The Committee welcomes the signing by the State party, on 10 December 1999, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, and its stated intention to work actively towards its speedy ratification.

393. The Committee commends the Government for maintaining a separate Ministry for the Advancement of Women and its intention to continue this institutional arrangement. It welcomes the Ministry's interest in, and support for, proposals to conduct a gender analysis of the entire State budget. This will contribute to a better understanding of the way in which women and men benefit from governmental expenditures in all areas. The Committee welcomes the Government's strategic approach to the realization of equality between women and men, which includes awareness-raising about the changing roles and responsibilities of women and men, on the one hand, and the systematic integration of a gender equality perspective into all policies, on the other.

394. The Committee welcomes the law of May 1999 that strengthened measures against trafficking in humans and the sexual exploitation of children and, in particular, extended Luxembourg law to cover all sexual crimes or misdemeanours committed abroad by citizens of Luxembourg.

395. The Committee commends the Government for its efforts to teach equality, in particular through its project entitled "*Partageons l'égalité-Glaichheet delen-Gleichheit teilen*" (sharing equality), which aims at promoting equality of opportunity between girls and boys from the pre-school stage, by integrating the equality principle into the training curricula of teachers

and trainers, including the development of training manuals and modules.

396. The Committee welcomes the legislation of July 1998 requiring the appointment of equality officers in enterprises with at least 15 employees. It also welcomes the entry into force, as of 1 January 1999, of the law on implementation of the national action plan on employment, which introduced the right to non-transferable parental leave of six months for every parent, covered by State benefits.

397. The Committee also welcomes the fact that the same law of July 1998 now provides the legal basis for instituting affirmative action for women in the private sector.

398. The Committee welcomes the efforts already undertaken and the intention to expand the collection of data disaggregated by sex to develop a solid basis for further legislative and policy initiatives, inter alia, with regard to disadvantaged groups of women such as immigrant women.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

399. The Committee notes that there are no significant factors or difficulties that prevent the effective implementation of the Convention in Luxembourg.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

400. The Committee notes with concern the failure of the State party to amend the Constitution to include the principle of equality between women and men. This is not only a failure to comply with the State party's specific obligations under article 2 of the Convention, but with international human rights law in general. In this regard, the Committee notes that this concern had already been raised during consideration of Luxembourg's second periodic report in 1997 and that, in a subsequent motion, the Chamber of Deputies of Luxembourg undertook to complete such an amendment as a matter of priority.

401. The Committee recommends that the Government undertake as a matter of urgency all necessary steps to facilitate the amendment of the Constitution to bring it in line with article 2 of the Convention. Once the Constitution is amended, the Committee recommends that a time-frame be set to review all legislation so as to bring it into compliance with the newly amended Constitution. The Committee underlines the importance of such legislative review to highlight the significance of the Constitutional amendment on equality between women and men, and to ensure effective domestic remedies. The Committee notes the crucial importance of such effective remedies in light of the pending entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

402. The Committee is concerned that, notwithstanding the Government's stated commitment in its action plan 2000 to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, no further progress has been made in withdrawing the reservations concerning articles 7 (hereditary transmission of the crown to the oldest male) and 16, paragraph 7 (g) (right to choose the family name of children). With regard to the latter, the Committee expresses its concern at the lack of governmental commitment to working towards influencing cultural traditions and attitudes which would allow for a withdrawal of the reservation.

403. The Committee urges the Government to take action towards the amendment of article 3 of the Constitution in view of the consent of the Grand Duke to such an amendment. The Committee also calls on the Government to undertake awareness-raising and education campaigns to overcome traditional and stereotypical images of women and men so as to enable it to withdraw its reservation under article 16.

404. The Committee is concerned at the persistence of traditional and stereotypical attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in public and in private life. These attitudes are reflected in people's behaviour and in legislation and policy, and limit women's full enjoyment of all their rights guaranteed under the Convention.

405. The Committee urges the Government to intensify its awareness-raising efforts, supported by legislation, policy and specific projects, to overcome such attitudes, so as to emphasize women's and men's shared family responsibilities and the importance of women's full participation in public and economic life.

406. The Committee expresses its concern that certain laws, for example, the waiting period of 300 days before a widow or divorced woman can remarry, and the legislation governing abortions, appear anachronistic in a country like Luxembourg. The Committee is concerned, in particular, that the

Government appears to lack the commitment to review and adapt this legislation to changing attitudes and developments in the European region.

407. The Committee urges the Government to provide the necessary leadership and to develop a comprehensive legislative agenda to amend such laws.

408. The Committee expresses concern at the lack of equality of opportunity of women in the labour market, as expressed in the relatively low percentage of women in the labour force (37 per cent of the active population), the wage gap between women and men, the higher number of women in part-time work, the ongoing segregation of the labour market and the stereotypical attitudes that tend to portray men as heads of households and breadwinners and women primarily as mothers and homemakers. The Committee is also concerned that there is insufficient understanding of the structural causes that perpetuate the wage gap, as women's work remains undervalued compared with men's work.

409. The Committee calls on the Government to undertake studies on the causes of the wage gap to improve the factual basis for labour negotiations where collective wages are set. It also urges the Government to analyse the projects now under way to broaden women's participation in the labour market so that the findings can be used for the development of comprehensive policies and legislation to secure the gains made by women in this area.

410. The Committee is concerned that, although adoption of a law on sexual harassment in the workplace is expected to take place soon, there is still no specific legislation on domestic violence.

411. The Committee urges the Government to develop a policy and legislation to prevent and eliminate domestic violence, and sexual violence, including rape, against women and girls, and to prosecute violators. The Committee calls on the State party to collect statistics on the incidence of domestic violence, and comprehensive information on the impact of measures against domestic violence. The Committee also recommends that the Government gather further information on the impact of the law on trafficking in humans and the sexual exploitation of children.

412. The Committee asks the Government to provide, in its next report, detailed information on article 12, relating to women and health, taking into consideration the Committee's general recommendation 24. Such information should include data on female smokers and smoking-related diseases.

413. The Committee urges the Government to deposit its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, on the time of meetings of the Committee, as soon as possible.

414. The Committee also urges the Government to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

415. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments.

416. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Luxembourg of the present concluding comments, in order to make the people of Luxembourg, and particularly government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women and the future steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Chapter V
Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

417. The Committee considered ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee (agenda item 6) at its 445th and 466th meetings, on 17 January and 4 February 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.445 and 466).

418. The item was introduced by the Chief of the Women's Rights Unit of the Division for the Advancement of Women, who introduced the reports of the secretariat (CEDAW/C/2000/I/4 and 5) and drew attention to a working paper on the draft rules of procedure (CEDAW/C/2000/I/WG.I/WP.1).

Action taken by the Committee under agenda item 6

1. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

419. The Committee expressed satisfaction at the adoption of the Optional Protocol by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session (resolution 54/4 of 6 October 1999) and its opening for signature, accession and ratification, and requested Silvia Cartwright to prepare a working paper containing proposals on working methods of the Committee with regard to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. The working paper would be discussed at the twenty-third session of the Committee.

2. Rules of procedure

420. The Committee adopted a significant part of the draft rules of procedure contained in working paper CEDAW/C/2000/I/WG.I/WP.1 and agreed to continue consideration of the remaining draft rules at its twenty-third session.

3. Overdue reports

421. The Committee requested the Secretariat to provide an analysis to be submitted to its twenty-third session of proposed approaches in cases where States parties have not submitted at least two reports required under article 18 of the Convention.

4. Members of the pre-session working group for the twenty-fourth session

422. The Committee decided that the members of the pre-session working group for the twenty-fourth session and their alternates should be:

Members

Mavivi Myabuyata-Manzini (Africa)

Rosario Manalo (Asia)

Yolanda Ferrer Gómez (Latin America and the Caribbean)

Feride Acar (Europe)

Alternates

Kongit Sinegiorgis (Africa)

Savitri Goonesckere (Asia)

Zelmira Regazzoli (Latin America and the Caribbean)

Ivanka Corti (Europe)

5. Reports to be considered at future sessions

423. The Committee decided that it would consider the following reports at its twenty-third, twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth sessions:

Twenty-third session

Initial reports

Cameroon

Lithuania

Maldives

Republic of Moldova

Third periodic reports

Iraq

Third and fourth periodic reports

Austria

Fourth periodic reports

Cuba

Romania

In the event that one of the above-mentioned States parties should be unable to present its report, the Committee will consider the initial report of Singapore.

Twenty-fourth session

Initial reports

Singapore

Uzbekistan

Second periodic reports

Netherlands

Combined second and third periodic reports

Jamaica

Third periodic reports

Egypt

Combined third and fourth periodic reports

Mongolia

Fourth periodic reports

Sweden

In the event that one of the above-mentioned States parties should be unable to present its report, the Committee will consider the second periodic report of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya or the third and fourth periodic reports of Finland.

Twenty-fifth session

Initial reports

Kazakhstan

Second periodic reports

Guyana

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Viet Nam

Third and fourth periodic reports

Finland

Fourth periodic reports

Nicaragua

In the event that one of the above-mentioned States parties should be unable to present its report, the Committee will consider the third periodic report of Iceland or Sri Lanka.

6. Dates of the twenty-third session of the Committee

424. Consistent with the calendar of conferences for 2000, the twenty-third session should be held from 12 to 30 June 2000. The pre-session working group for the twenty-fourth session will meet from 3 to 7 July 2000.

United Nations meetings to be attended by the Chairperson or members of the Committee in 2000

425. The Committee recommended that the Chairperson or an alternate should attend the following meetings in 2000:

(a) The Commission on the Status of Women acting as preparatory committee for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century";

(b) The Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session;

(c) The twelfth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies;

(d) The General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session (Third Committee).

Chapter VI
Implementation of article 21 of the Convention

426. The Committee considered the implementation of article 21 of the Convention (agenda item 5) at its 445th and 466th meetings, on 17 January and 4 February 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.445 and 466).

427. The item was presented by the Chief of the Women's Rights Unit of the Division for the Advancement of Women, who introduced a note by the Secretary-General on reports of the specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities (CEDAW/C/2000/I/3 and Add.1-4).

Action taken by the Committee under agenda item 5

1. Report on the implementation of the Platform for Action

428. The Committee requested that its report on progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action based on the review of reports submitted under article 18 of the Convention (E/CN.6/1999/PC/4) be

issued by the Division for the Advancement of Women as one of the issues of *Women 2000*.

2. Special session of the General Assembly — women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century

429. To mark the special session, the Committee adopted a statement on the links between the Platform for Action and the Convention (see chap. I, sect. A, above).

Chapter VII
Provisional agenda for the twenty-third session

430. The Committee considered the provisional agenda for its twenty-third session at its 466th meeting, on 4 February 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.466). The Committee decided to approve the following provisional agenda:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the Committee.
4. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
5. Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
6. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee.
7. Provisional agenda of the twenty-fourth session.
8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twenty-third session.

Chapter VIII
Adoption of the report

431. At its 466th meeting, on 4 February 2000, the Committee adopted the report on its twenty-second session (CEDAW/C/2000/I/L.1 and CEDAW/C/2000/I/CRP.3 and Add.1-9), as orally amended.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38* and corrigendum (A/45/38 and Corr.1), paras. 28-31.

Part two
Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its twenty-third session

Letter of transmittal

1 August 2000

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, according to which the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, established pursuant to the Convention, "shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities".

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women held its twenty-third session from 12 to 30 June 2000 at United Nations Headquarters. It adopted its report on the session at the 485th meeting, on 30 June 2000. The report of the Committee is herewith submitted to you for transmission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

(*Signed*) Aida **González Martínez**
Chairperson
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

His Excellency Mr. Kofi **Annan**
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

Chapter I
Matters brought to the attention of States parties

A. Decisions

Decision 23/I
Revised rules of procedure

The Committee decided to adopt the revised rules of procedure (CEDAW/C/2000/I/WG.I/WP.I) as to substance, but subject to editing by the Secretariat, in consultation with Ms. Silvia Cartwright. The rules of procedure would be adopted in final form at the twenty-fourth session of the Committee in January/February 2001.

Decision 23/II
Overdue reports required under article 18 of the Convention

The Committee decided, on an exceptional basis and as a temporary measure in order to address the backlog of reports awaiting consideration and encourage States parties to fulfil their reporting obligations within article 18 of the Convention, to invite States parties with overdue reports to combine these outstanding reports in a single document. The Committee decided that the Secretariat should inform the relevant States parties of this decision.

Decision 23/III
General recommendation on article 4 of the Convention

The Committee decided to prepare a general recommendation on article 4 of the Convention. Bearing in mind the Committee's three-stage process for the preparation of general recommendations adopted at its seventeenth session, the Committee decided that a general discussion and exchange of views with specialized agencies, other bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations should take place during its twenty-fourth session in January/February 2001.

B. Suggestion

Suggestion 23/I

Taking into account article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, the Committee requested that the Secretariat explore the possibility of the Committee holding one of its regular sessions in 2002 or 2003, such as the twenty-sixth or twenty-eighth session, outside United Nations Headquarters, and in particular in the Asia-Pacific region, in order to facilitate the consideration of the initial or periodic reports of States parties from that region.

Chapter II
Organizational and other matters

A. States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1. On 30 June 2000, the closing date of the twenty-third session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, there were 165 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979 and opened for signature, ratification and accession in New York in March 1980. In accordance with article 27, the Convention entered into force on 3 September 1981.

2. A list of States parties to the Convention is contained in annex I to the present report. A list of States parties that have accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention is contained in annex II. A list of States parties that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/4 of 6 October 1999, and opened for signature on 10 December 1999, is contained in annex III.

B. Opening of the session

3. The Committee held its twenty-third session at United Nations Headquarters from 12 to 30 June 2000. The Committee held 19 plenary meetings (467th-485th) and its working groups held 21 meetings. A list

of the documents before the Committee is contained in annex IV, section B.

4. The session was opened by the Chairperson of the Committee, Aida Gonzalez Martinez (Mexico).

5. Addressing the Committee, the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, Angela King, stated that the current session was being held after the very positive closing of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century", at which the General Assembly had reviewed the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women.[1]

6. Representatives of 178 Member States, 16 observers and 5 non-governmental organizations had addressed the special session. In all, over 2,300 delegates, not including the mission staff, and over 2,000 representatives of non-governmental organizations had participated in the session.

7. The Special Adviser emphasized that a large number of Member States had pledged their commitment to the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and had expressed their firm intention to ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol. She reiterated the concerns voiced by Member States that the goal of the universal ratification of the Convention by the year 2000, established in the Beijing Platform for Action, had not been achieved; that there continued to exist a large number of reservations to the Convention; and that many countries had not yet fully implemented the provisions of the Convention.

8. She noted that in enumerating the 199 actions and initiatives to be undertaken to overcome obstacles to the full implementation of the Platform for Action, the Member States had expressed their firm intention to ratify the Convention, limit or remove their reservations and accept the Optional Protocol. One of the initiatives incumbent upon the United Nations system was a requirement that the United Nations and regional organizations assist States parties, at their request, in building their capacities for the implementation of the Convention. Among other agreed actions were those aimed at creating a gender-sensitive legal and policy environment, including a review of legislation, with a view to removing discriminatory provisions by the year 2005, and eliminating legislative gaps that left women and girls without protection of their rights and without effective recourse against gender-based discrimination. Definite gains had been made in several areas, including recommendations for ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and more extensive criminalization of violence against women, in particular domestic violence, crimes of honour and of passion and trafficking. Recommendations concerning globalization, health rights and HIV/AIDS were also among the many other areas addressed in the recommendations of Member States.

9. The Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, Yakin Ertürk, indicated that, since the closure of the twenty-second session of the Committee, the Division had focused on the forty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, on the third session of the Commission acting as preparatory committee for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and on the special session itself.

10. During the forty-fourth session of the Commission, delegates had urged Governments to make efforts to realize the goal of universal ratification of the Convention by the year 2000, as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, and to limit or withdraw reservations that had been entered to its terms. Acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention relating to meetings of the Committee was also advocated, as was the full implementation of the Convention at the national level. The Director emphasized that the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the Convention was welcomed by delegates, and States were urged to sign and ratify or accede to it.

11. The commitment of Governments with regard to the Optional Protocol had largely been translated into reality. To date, 41 States parties to the Convention had signed the Optional Protocol and four had ratified it. The first State party to ratify it was Namibia, closely followed by Senegal and Denmark. During the special session, a number of States had committed themselves to ratification of, or accession to, the Optional Protocol.

12. She informed the Committee that several of the side events at the special session had been concerned with the Optional Protocol, including one chaired by

the Chairperson of the Committee and with the participation of a number of the Committee experts. It was her view that the 10 ratifications required for the entry into force of the Optional Protocol would be achieved during 2000.

13. Turning to the work of the Committee, the Director recalled that at its twenty-second session the Committee had decided to consider the reports of eight States parties during the current session; however, one of those States parties was unable to present its report. Experts would therefore consider the reports of seven States parties and would continue their consideration of the rules of procedure of the Committee, with a view to their finalization. Experts would also have before them a working paper on procedures with regard to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, prepared by Silvia Cartwright. In conclusion, the Director congratulated the members of the pre-session working group for its strenuous efforts in drawing up the lists of issues and questions to be raised with regard to periodic reports.

C. Attendance

14. All members of the Committee attended the twenty-third session, with the exception of Carlotta Bustelo and Anne Lise Ryel. Emna Aouij attended from 19 to 30 June, Naela Gabr from 21 to 30 June, Savitri Goonesekere from 16 to 30 June and Kongit Sinegiorgis from19 to 30 June 2000.

15. A list of the members of the Committee, indicating their terms of office, is contained in annex V.

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

16. The Committee considered the provisional agenda and organization of work (CEDAW/C/II/1) at its 467th meeting, on 12 June 2000. The agenda as adopted was follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report of the Chairperson on the activities undertaken between the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the Committee.
4. Consideration of the reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
5. Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
6. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee.
7. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session.
8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twenty-third session.

E. Report of the pre-session working group

17. At its ninth session,[2] the Committee had decided to convene a pre-session working group for five days before each session to prepare a list of issues and questions relating to periodic reports that would be considered by the Committee at the session.

18. The following four members, representing different regional groups, participated in the working group: Charlotte Abaka (Africa); Yung-Chung Kim (Asia); Zelmira Regazzoli (Latin America and the Caribbean); and Hanna Beate Schöpp-Schilling (Europe).

19. The working group prepared a list of issues and questions relating to the reports of four States parties, namely, Austria, Cuba, Iraq and Romania.

20. At the 477th meeting of the Committee, on 20 June 2000, the Chairperson of the pre-session working group, Charlotte Abaka, introduced the report of the working group (CEDAW/C/2000/II/CRP.1 and Add.1-4).

F. Composition and organization of work of the working groups

21. At the 467th meeting, on 12 June 2000, the Committee decided to take up issues under agenda

items 5 (Implementation of article 21 of the Convention) and 6 (Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee) as a working group of the whole. The issues that it decided to consider were the revised rules of procedure of the Committee and procedures to be adopted with regard to the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

Chapter III
Report of the Chairperson on the activities undertaken between the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the Committee

22. At the 467th meeting of the Committee, on 12 June 2000, the Chairperson of the Committee stated that since 4 February 2000, the date of closure of the twenty-second session, numerous events had taken place and many comments had been made regarding both the work and the functions of the Committee.

23. One of the many meetings held in preparation for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly was the eighth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held at Lima from 8 to 10 February 2000. The Conference had adopted the Lima Consensus, in which participating countries had reiterated their commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as the legal framework of the Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001, adopted at the sixth session of the Regional Conference, and the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women.

24. The Chairperson indicated that during the forty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, acting also as the third session of the preparatory committee for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, several delegations, including that of Portugal, speaking on behalf of the European Union, had also noted that the Convention constituted the legal framework of the Platform for Action. States parties were also asked to review their reservations to the Convention with a view to their withdrawal.

25. At its twenty-third special session, the General Assembly had monitored the progress made in implementation of the Platform for Action and identified future actions to be taken. Some of the experts had participated as members of their national delegations, while others had participated with the support of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the World Health Organization. The Chairperson drew attention to a panel on the Optional Protocol to the Convention in which officials from government ministries in Namibia and Senegal had participated, along with members of the Committee. One of the members of the Committee, Zelmira Regazzoli, had moderated a panel whose participants included the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson; the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Navi Pillay; the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Noeleen Heyzer; Ms. Gaye McDougall, a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Asma Jahingar. As at 12 June 2000, four States parties had ratified the Optional Protocol, namely Denmark, France, Namibia and Senegal. The Chairperson expressed the hope that the Protocol would soon enter into force.

26. She also reported that she had participated in the general debate of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in her capacity as Chairperson of the Committee and had based her intervention on the declaration adopted by the Committee at its twenty-second session on the links between the Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action. Following difficult negotiations, the Assembly had ended the work of its twenty-third special session by reaching consensus on a document that identified obstacles, new trends and challenges and elaborated future actions. On a less positive note, she added, the goal of universal ratification of the Convention by 2000 had not been achieved, but the document did highlight the Convention and its Optional Protocol, urging their ratification or accession thereto, and referred to the need to examine any reservations made to the Convention and the importance of their removal. She emphasized that the Committee must carefully analyse the final outcome document of the twenty-third special session for consistency between initiatives and actions to be adopted and those to be undertaken for the full implementation of the Convention. She also praised the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women

which, under the direction of Yakin Ertürk, had contributed to the successful outcome of the special session.

27. In conclusion, the Chairperson stressed that the twenty-third session of the Committee was important not only because the reports of seven countries would be analysed, but also because the entry into force of the Optional Protocol was imminent.

Chapter IV
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

A. Introduction

28. At its twenty-third session, the Committee considered the reports of seven States parties submitted under article 18 of the Convention: two initial reports; the initial and second periodic reports of one State party; one combined second and third periodic report; the combined third and fourth periodic reports and fifth periodic report of one State party; one fourth periodic report; and one combined fourth and fifth periodic report.

29. The Committee prepared concluding comments on the report of each State party considered. The Committee's concluding comments on the report of each State party, as prepared by the members of the Committee, and a summary of the introductory presentations by the representatives of the States parties are set out below.

B. Consideration of reports of States parties

1. Initial reports

Cameroon

30. The Committee considered the initial report of Cameroon (CEDAW/C/CMR/1) at its 476th, 477th and 483rd meetings, on 20 and 26 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.476, 477 and 483).

Introduction by the State party

31. In introducing the report, the representative of Cameroon informed the Committee that in Cameroon, discrimination against women resulted from the de facto situation rather than de jure. For example, the use by a woman of her husband's name was optional and not a legal obligation. Prior to the ratification of the Convention without reservations by Cameroon, the Government had implemented a variety of legislative and judicial measures to address de jure discrimination. These included the adoption, in 1972, of the Constitution, which enshrined the principle of equality between the sexes. Other legislative measures introduced prior to the ratification of the Convention were: the Labour Code, which recognized the right to work; the General Statute of the State Public Function, which gave all citizens, with no distinction on the grounds of sex, the right to have access to public functions; and the Code on Nationality, which granted women and men the same rights in relation to the award, change or retention of nationality.

32. The representative indicated that, although laws were not discriminatory, certain legal measures, because of ambiguity, might disadvantage women. In particular, article 7 of the Trade Code allowed a husband to interrupt his wife's working activity through notification of his opposition to the Trade Tribunal. According to articles 1421 and 1428 of the Civil Code, women were not fully entitled to use, enjoy or sell their property, although those rights were stipulated in the Constitution. In this context, article 1421 granted the husband the right to administer communal property, thereby giving him the right to sell or mortgage the couple's property without the wife's consent. Articles 108 and 215 of the Civil Code granted the husband the sole right to determine the family domicile, and article 361 of the Penal Code defined the crime of adultery in terms more favourable to men than women.

33. The representative informed the Committee that the Government had adopted several legal measures to ensure equality between women and men. These included removal of the requirement of the husband's authorization for the wife's travel abroad, the provision of housing benefits to women workers on an equal basis with men and the readmission of girls who had been suspended from school due to pregnancy. Court decisions, including ruling No. 14/L, 1993, by the

Supreme Court, recognizing women's right to inheritance, had also helped to address discrimination.

34. The representative indicated that since ratification of the Convention, the Commission of Legislative and Juridical Reforms had been reorganized within the Ministry of Justice and now included a Commission on Civil Legislation, through which the Ministry on the Status of Women was represented. The Commission was drafting a new Family Code. A service unit in charge of reform had been created in the Ministry on the Status of Women, within the Directorate for Promotion and Reform, and planned to initiate bills to promote women's rights. In this regard, a bill was being prepared that would address violence against women, including the issue of female genital mutilation.

35. The representative informed the Committee that structures for the promotion of women existed at the central, intermediate and community levels and that focal points had been established within certain structures. Delegations of the Ministry on the Status of Women existed at the provincial and departmental levels, services at the district level and a pool of activities at the local level. There was also a network of organizations, including non-governmental organizations, that worked to promote women's rights, address violence and discrimination against women and promote training for women in cultural, socio-economic, scientific and technological areas.

36. The representative informed the Committee that among the factors impeding the implementation of the Convention in Cameroon were: the multi-ethnic nature of the country; the coexistence of conflicting norms of customary and general law; the existence of a dual system inherited from French and British colonialism; the limited knowledge of the Convention among the different social actors; the absence of a legal definition of discrimination and of discrimination-related sanctions; the high level of illiteracy among women; limited material, financial and human resource allocation to mechanisms aimed at promoting the advancement of women; the difficult international economic environment which, through structural adjustment programmes, was leading to the dismantling of social security; and women's limited participation in efforts aimed at improving their status, both in terms of political participation and in awareness of the role they could play to improve their status.

37. The representative informed the Committee of developments that had occurred in Cameroon since the submission of its report to the Committee in 1998, particularly at the political level, demonstrating the Government's commitment to confront different forms of violence and discrimination against women. Further actions were envisaged for the future in order to ensure that women's rights were promoted and protected in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

38. The Committee commends the Government of Cameroon for ratifying the Convention without reservation and for presenting a detailed and well-structured initial report, which provides information on the implementation of all the articles of the Convention, as well as relevant statistics. It thanks the representative of Cameroon for her oral presentation and for the replies to questions from the Committee, which provided a better insight into developments regarding the situation of women in Cameroon.

39. The Committee also commends the Government for sending a large, high-level delegation headed by the Minister on the Status of Women. It appreciates the open-mindedness with which the report was prepared and presented by the State party, which has engaged the Committee in a constructive dialogue.

40. The Committee welcomes the incorporation, by article 65 of the Constitution of 1996, of the Convention into the domestic legal system.

41. The Committee commends the Government for involving women's associations and non-governmental organizations in the preparation of the initial report.

Positive aspects

42. The Committee welcomes the establishment, in December 1997, of the Ministry on the Status of Women, which testifies to the Government's interest in promoting the rights of women. It also notes with satisfaction that the Ministry has designated focal points in all the ministries, with a view to taking gender-specific matters into account in all national programmes and policies benefiting women. In particular, it welcomes the national action plan for the advancement of women.

43. The Committee commends the Government of Cameroon for its measures aimed at eliminating the practice of genital mutilation, which is a violation of human rights and is injurious to the physical and psychological well-being of girls, and poses a threat to their lives and health.

Factors and difficulties affecting implementation of the Convention

44. The Committee recognizes that implementation of the structural adjustment programme, coupled with privatization, especially in the health and education sectors, poses serious challenges to the full implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

45. The Committee notes with concern that, despite the incorporation of the Convention into domestic law and some legislative achievements, a number of discriminatory provisions exist, thus impeding full implementation of the Convention. The Committee is also concerned that the retention of discriminatory laws from two different legal systems, as well as customary law, compounds this problem.

46. The Committee recommends that the State party should urgently undertake a comprehensive reform of legislation in order to promote equality and human rights for women. The Committee also recommends the introduction of effective legal remedies and a review and revision of customary law that infringes the human rights of women.

47. The Committee considers that the inadequate allocation of resources for the advancement of women, with the resultant incomplete execution of programmes and projects, seriously jeopardizes the improvement of women's living conditions.

48. The Committee urges the Government to allocate sufficient resources for targeted programmes to promote the advancement of women.

49. The Committee notes with concern that, despite some efforts, there is no holistic approach to the prevention and elimination of the various forms of violence against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilation and domestic violence.

50. The Committee invites the Government to apply the Committee's general recommendation 19 and formulate policies and programmes to eliminate these violations of women's human rights. It recommends that the Government provide access to legal remedies and medical services, establish counselling services for the victims, train legal, health and police personnel, and launch public-awareness campaigns in order to achieve zero tolerance with regard to all forms of violence against women and girls.

51. The Committee is concerned that because of the increased feminization of poverty, more women and girls are entering prostitution and are thereby exposed to exploitation.

52. The Committee urges the Government to design and implement poverty alleviation programmes so that women and girls do not have to resort to prostitution for their livelihoods. It recommends that the Government develop programmes to reintegrate prostitutes, raise public awareness and prevent such exploitation. Moreover, in the light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Cameroon, full attention must be paid to the health services available to prostitutes.

53. The Committee is disturbed by the persistence of cultural practices and deep-rooted stereotypes relating to the roles and responsibilities of women and men in all areas of life, which affect their enjoyment of all human rights.

54. The Committee urges the Government to review all aspects of this situation and to adopt legislation to prohibit discriminatory cultural practices, in particular those relating to female genital mutilation, levirate, inheritance, early and forced marriage and polygamy. It also urges the Government to carry out further public-awareness, information and training programmes targeting community leaders and the general public, so as to change ways of thinking and the stereotyped perceptions of the roles and responsibilities of women and men.

55. The Committee is concerned at the extremely low percentage of women candidates for election and appointed to public office and decision-making posts, and at the low percentage of women in ministerial posts.

56. The Committee urges the Government to take effective measures to increase the number of women elected and appointed to public office and positions of decision-making.

57. Despite the Government's efforts in the area of education, the Committee is concerned at the low rate of female literacy, the high female dropout rate, and the low rate of female enrolment in basic education.

58. The Committee encourages the Government to intensify its efforts to promote female access to basic and secondary education and to develop programmes specifically designed to reduce female illiteracy.

59. The Committee notes with concern the high rate of fertility and repeated pregnancy, the high mortality rate among mothers and children and the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Cameroon.

60. The Committee urges the Government to review the abortion laws, to undertake to increase the use of contraceptives, and to develop programmes to protect mothers and children. It further recommends that the Government strengthen its awareness campaigns to make women aware of the risks and effects of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

61. The Committee notes with concern that, despite the important role of rural women in Cameroon and despite the Government's efforts to provide them with education and extension services, these women are disadvantaged and living in difficult circumstances.

62. The Committee urges the Government to pay the utmost attention to the needs of rural women and to ensure that they benefit from the policies and programmes adopted in all areas. It should also ensure that rural women are able to participate, on an equal basis, in the adoption of decisions to guarantee them access to literacy, health services, drinking water and credit.

63. The Committee urges the Government to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

64. The Committee encourages the Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

65. The Committee urges the Government to respond in its next periodic report to the specific questions raised in the present conclusions. It also urges the Government to improve the collection and analysis of statistical data broken down by gender and age with regard to poverty and violence against women and with regard to the application of articles 10, 11, 12, 14 and 16 of the Convention, and to submit such data to the Committee in its next report.

66. The Committee requests that the text of the present conclusions should be widely disseminated in Cameroon so as to inform the public, in particular administrators, officials and politicians, of the measures taken to guarantee equality de jure and de facto between men and women, and of the supplementary measures to be adopted in this area. The Committee also urges the Government to continue to give broad publicity, particularly among women's associations and human rights organizations, to the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the general recommendations of the Committee, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the results of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", held in June 2000.

Republic of Moldova

67. The Committee considered the initial report of the Republic of Moldova (CEDAW/C/MDA/1) at its 478th, 479th and 484th meetings, on 21 and 27 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.478, 479 and 484).

Introduction by the State party

68. In introducing the report, the representative of the Republic of Moldova drew attention to the period of change which the country had undergone towards a democratic society, and the political, economic and social transformation that had influenced the development of society, including women's activities. The ratification of the Convention in 1994 was an expression of the country's commitment to women's rights. While the Constitution and existing legislation enshrined equality between women and men, and no discriminatory provisions were contained in the law, the Government recognized that there was a need for further legislative reform, as well as for the creation of adequate mechanisms for the realization of women's rights.

69. A national action plan had been adopted in 1998 to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Cooperation between governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations to elaborate programmes for women was taking on increasing

importance, and the Republic of Moldova had also benefited from the cooperation and technical assistance of international organizations, especially the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank.

70. She noted that new legislation was being drafted to cover labour issues, family, criminal and civil matters. Women parliamentarians, together with governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations, provided support to harmonize these reforms with the provisions of the Convention.

71. The representative brought the Committee up to date on developments in the Republic of Moldova since the submission of the report. They included the creation of a Commission on Questions of Women and the Family to advise the President of the Republic and the designation of gender focal points to monitor and coordinate implementation of the principle of equal opportunity in ministries, local governments and other entities. Consideration was being given to the establishment of a Department for family policy and equal opportunities.

72. The challenges of the transition to a market-based economy were visible in women's low economic activity rate, which stood at 43.6 per cent in 1999, their level of unemployment, overall poverty levels, and massive migration, especially of women. The latter had also led to an increase in trafficking in women, and steps were being taken by the Government to prevent and combat that scourge, including plans to improve legislation. Women's low representation in public and political life remained another area of concern.

73. The representative highlighted women's educational achievements, where they made up 55 per cent in secondary and 58 per cent in tertiary educational institutions in 1998/99. She also noted that women's literacy rate was 94.5 per cent. Efforts to change traditional attitudes concerning the role of women in society and in the family included curricula revisions at various levels of education, as well as the introduction of a course on gender education at the University of Moldova.

74. While the right to work was protected by the Constitution, various legislative provisions aimed at protecting women against discrimination in the labour market. The Republic of Moldova had ratified Convention 100 of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The transition to a market-based economy required new skills and qualifications, and women represented a high percentage of those who received training in new skills. Women represented three quarters of the unskilled labour force, and received 70-80 per cent of male wages.

75. At the same time, women remained primarily responsible for household activities, and the traditional division of labour in the household had been reinforced by certain policies.

76. That double burden of women was even more pronounced in rural areas, and also constituted an obstacle to women becoming entrepreneurs. In fact, women's representation at the decision-making level in large businesses remained low, but women made up some 48 per cent of micro-entrepreneurs.

77. The representative noted that social rights granted to women as mothers actually had a negative effect on their position in the labour market. The Government intended to address the matter by extending parental benefits also to fathers, and a revision of the Labour Code in that regard was envisaged. Efforts were also under way to create a system of labour inspection.

78. While the law provided for equal access of women and men to free basic health care, including for pregnant women and children, those provisions were not implemented because of the difficult economic situation. Working conditions were often hazardous, and the poor level of nutrition had led to an increase in the rate of anaemia in pregnant women. The Government had adopted programmes to address those issues, including plans to open prenatal health care offices at the district level.

79. Access to medical care, including family planning, remained a problem especially in rural areas. A law governing reproductive health and family planning was under consideration.

80. The poor health situation of women was frequently caused by violence. Although the law protected women against all forms of violence, including domestic violence, it was difficult for the State to intervene in situations that were considered as family conflicts. In addition, access to justice for victims of violence was very complicated. The planned revisions of the criminal code and of the code of criminal procedure would address those matters.

81. Furthermore, a new Family Code intended to reflect the change in social relations, including family relations, and would also address the question of matrimonial property.

82. The representative noted that the Republic of Moldova's legislation covered the rights of women, but lacked a prohibition of, or sanctions against, discrimination against women. The Government was aware of the importance of such legislation to achieve equality and equal opportunity. She also noted that the Government had initiated the process of acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

83. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Moldova for submitting its initial report. It commends the Government on its frank and substantive oral presentation, which updated developments in the State party since the submission of its report in 1998, and which further clarified the present status of implementation of the Convention.

84. The Committee commends the Government of the Republic of Moldova for sending the Vice-Minister for Labour, Social Protection and the Family, who established a constructive and frank dialogue with the members of the Committee.

85. The Committee welcomes the fact that the Republic of Moldova adopted the Convention without reservations and formulated a plan of action pursuant to the Beijing Platform for Action.

Positive aspects

86. The Committee commends the Government for its expressed political will to implement the Convention. It welcomes the Government's efforts to review and amend its legislation to comply with its obligations under the Convention.

87. The Committee congratulates the Government on its intention to ratify, as soon as possible, the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

88. The Committee commends the Government for its efforts to ensure continued high levels of education in the population in general, and women in particular.

89. The Committee welcomes the Government's recognition of the important role of the increasing number of non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society that are active in women's issues.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

90. The Committee considers that the country's ongoing political and economic change and the resulting high level of women's poverty are major impediments to the full implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

91. The Committee is concerned that although the Constitution provides for the equality of all citizens before the law and public authorities, including on grounds of sex, it does not reflect the definition of discrimination in article 1 of the Convention, which prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination. The Committee is also concerned about the status of the Convention in domestic law, and whether its provisions can be directly invoked before the Courts. It is further concerned about the lack of information provided about remedies available to women for redress of violations of their rights protected under the Convention.

92. The Committee calls on the Government to encourage a constitutional amendment to incorporate equality on the basis of sex in the Constitution and to reflect fully article 1 of the Convention. It requests the Government to clarify the status of the Convention in domestic law, and to ensure, through legal education and continuing professional training, that judicial officers are aware of the Convention. It requests the Government to provide in its next report information about the remedies available to women, and about any court cases based on the Convention.

93. The Committee, while appreciating the efforts undertaken to implement the Convention, notes with concern that the legislative framework for the implementation of the Convention has not yet been completed, and that several critical legislative proposals and amendments remain at the drafting stage.

94. The Committee calls on the Government to seek, as a matter of urgency, the completion of a non-discriminatory legislative framework that is fully consistent, and in compliance, with the Convention. It recommends in particular that all measures be taken to

ensure the early adoption of the law on equal opportunities.

95. The Committee is concerned about the lack of an overall, integrated policy for the achievement of gender equality, which contributes to the disproportionately heavy burden of transition carried by the women of the Republic of Moldova.

96. The Committee recommends that the Government take urgent action to put in place an integrated gender equality policy to promote equality between women and men in all areas, and in particular in the economy, in political and public life, and in the family. The Committee emphasizes that a gender equality policy in accordance with the Convention will require a new approach in the Republic of Moldova that focuses on women as individuals and active agents of change and claimants of rights.

97. The Committee notes with concern the persistence of stereotyped attitudes and behaviour patterns about the roles of women and men in the family and in society. It is further concerned that there is no clear understanding of article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention. Stereotyped attitudes are reflected, for example, in the low level of women's participation in decision-making in political life, where women hold fewer than 10 per cent of the seats in Parliament. Such stereotyped behaviour is also reflected in the lack of sharing of responsibilities between women and men for household and family duties.

98. The Committee recommends that the Government take urgent measures to overcome stereotyped and patriarchal societal attitudes. It recommends that the Government use article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention to increase the number of women in decision-making at all levels, and in all areas, including the establishment of targets and of timetables to monitor progress. It further urges the Government to take urgent measures to modify social and cultural patterns of behaviour, including through information and public awareness-raising campaigns, so as to facilitate the emergence of non-discriminatory attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men. The Committee invites the Government to take fully into account the Committee's general recommendation 23 on women in public life.

99. The Committee expresses its concern about the adequacy of the mandate and resources of the national machinery for the advancement of women to provide overall leadership for the elaboration, prioritization and implementation of the Government's equality policy and legislative agenda, including sectoral coordination within the Government, and with civil society.

100. The Committee recommends that the Government assess the capacity of the national machinery for the advancement of women, including its location, mandate and resources, with a view to providing it with the full political support and human and financial resources required to lead the Government's efforts to implement the Convention.

101. The Committee is concerned about the prevalence of all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence.

102. The Committee urges the Government to place high priority on measures to address violence against women in the family and in society, and to recognize that such violence, including domestic violence, constitutes a violation of the human rights of women under the Convention. In the light of its general recommendation 19 on violence against women, the Committee calls on the Government to ensure that such violence constitutes a crime punishable under criminal law, that it is prosecuted and punished with the required severity and speed, and that women victims of violence have immediate means of redress and protection. It recommends that measures be taken to ensure that public officials, especially law enforcement officials and the judiciary, are fully sensitized to all forms of violence against women. The Committee also invites the Government to undertake awareness-raising measures, including a campaign of zero tolerance, to make such violence socially and morally unacceptable.

103. The Committee expresses its concern about the increase in trafficking in women and girls for a variety of purposes including sexual exploitation, often under false pretences.

104. The Committee urges the Government to implement a holistic approach to combat trafficking in women for commercial or sexual purposes. This should include a legislative framework to prosecute and punish traffickers, preventive measures aimed at improving women's economic situation so as to reduce their economic vulnerabilities, and measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate trafficked women where necessary. It also urges the Government to increase international and cross-border cooperation, especially with receiving countries, to reduce the incidence of

trafficking and prosecute traffickers, as well as to ensure the protection of the human rights of trafficked women.

105. The Committee, while noting women's high educational levels, expresses its concern about the predominance of women in low-level educational sectors. It is also concerned about the lack of statistical information concerning women's representation in various fields of teaching, and in administrative and high-level posts at all levels of education. The Committee is also concerned about the persistence of stereotyped portrayals of women and men in curricula and teaching materials.

106. The Committee urges the Government to undertake curriculum reforms and textbook revisions addressing stereotyped images. It also recommends that the Government's educational policy include measures to encourage girls and women to seek education and training in non-traditional fields, as well as in growth areas of the economy. The Committee calls on the Government to implement temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to accelerate women's representation in educational decision-making.

107. The Committee is concerned about the situation of women in the labour market, including women's unemployment levels, job segregation and the fact that, because of lack of opportunity at home, many women seek employment abroad, often without obtaining work permits. The Committee is also concerned that the country's protective labour laws may create obstacles to women's participation in the labour market.

108. The Committee urges the Government to ensure that legislation is in place prohibiting both direct and indirect discrimination against women in the labour market, and guaranteeing to women equal opportunities in accordance with article 11 of the Convention and relevant ILO conventions ratified by the Republic of Moldova. It urges the Government to consider establishing an equal opportunities ombudsman to monitor implementation of such legislation, and with the power to receive complaints about violations. It also recommends that the Government review protective legislation with a view to reducing barriers for women in the labour market. It recommends that the Government's labour market and employment policies target explicitly those groups of women who are particularly disadvantaged by the impact of transition. It invites the Government to increase measures to adopt the sharing of family responsibilities between spouses. It recommends that the Government ensure that sexual harassment in the workplace is covered by legislation that is fully implemented.

109. The Committee, while noting declines in women's mortality rates, is concerned about the status of women's health, especially women's reproductive health, and that abortion is apparently used as a means of fertility control. It is also concerned about women's occupational health, in particular in the tobacco-growing industry.

110. The Committee urges the Government to maintain free access to basic health care, to include a life-cycle approach to women's health in its health policy, and to improve its family planning and reproductive health policy, including availability and accessibility of modern contraceptive means. It encourages the Government to include sex education systematically in schools, including vocational training schools. It encourages the Government to continue its cooperation with international organizations to improve the general health situation of women and girls in the Republic of Moldova, and to take measures aimed at reducing occupational health risks to women workers. It requests the Government to provide detailed information in its next report on measures undertaken by the Government to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases among women. It also requests the Government to provide statistics on women's tobacco, alcohol and drug use and other substance abuse.

111. The Committee is concerned about the lack of information about the various aspects of the situation of rural women in the Republic of Moldova.

112. The Committee requests that the Government provide in its next report detailed information about all aspects covered by article 14 of the Convention. In this regard, it requests that information be provided about rural women's educational, health, housing and employment situation, including entrepreneurship opportunities, compared to women living in urban areas.

113. The Committee is concerned at the differential ages of marriage established in the Family Code for boys and girls and the legal recognition of marriages of girl children, which is not in conformity with article 16, paragraph 2, of the Convention.

114. The Committee recommends that the Government take action to bring legislation on the marriage age for women and men into full conformity with the Convention, taking into consideration the Committee's general recommendation 21.

115. The Committee encourages the Government to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

116. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments. It further requests the Government to provide in its next report an assessment of the impact of measures taken to implement the Convention.

117. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in the Republic of Moldova of the present concluding comments, in order to make the people of the Republic of Moldova, and particularly government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women and the future steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the results of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

2. Initial and second periodic reports

Lithuania

118. The Committee considered the initial report and the second periodic report of Lithuania (CEDAW/C/LTU/1 and 2) at its 472nd, 473rd and 480th meetings, on 16 and 22 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.472, 473 and 480).

Introduction by the State party

119. In introducing the report, the representative of Lithuania informed the Committee that the priority of State policy was to ensure equal opportunities for men and women. The principle of equality was based on respecting all the fundamental human rights of men and women irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, religion or social status. All fundamental human rights were provided for in the Constitution, which also guaranteed fundamental civil rights. He indicated that, as a member of the Council of Europe and an applicant for membership of the European Union, Lithuania was in the process of bringing its national legislation into compliance with that of the European Union Directives. Lithuania had also acceded to a whole range of other international human rights instruments and had completed all necessary internal legal procedures for the signature of the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

120. The representative informed the Committee that the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men had come into force on 1 March 1999. The definition of discrimination in the Law fully corresponded to the definition in article 1 of the Convention. The Law had also introduced the concepts of positive discrimination, equal opportunities and sexual harassment. He noted that the monitoring of the implementation of the Law had been delegated to the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, which had been established by the Parliament on 25 May 1999.

121. The representative informed the Committee about the institutional structures that existed to address women's issues. They included the Office of Adviser to the Government on the issues of equal opportunities, a subdivision on women's issues within the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, a gender statistics section established in the Department of Statistics, as well as a group of women parliamentarians and the Commission of the Parliament on Family and Children. In addition, in March 2000, the Government had established a permanent Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The representative further emphasized the important role that non-governmental organizations were playing with regard to women's issues. The number of women's non-governmental organizations had expanded to 63 in 1999 from 50 in 1997. He noted that the Information Centre on Women's Issues was the most active women's organization that collected and studied statistical data on women in the areas of education, health, and employment, inter alia.

122. The representative informed the Committee about the increase of women's participation in political life. Women currently constituted 18 per cent of all members of the Parliament in comparison with 7 per cent in 1992. Women were also taking a more active

part in local elections to municipalities. In 2000, women made up 30 per cent of all nominees, compared to 24 per cent in 1995.

123. The representative informed the Committee about the situation of women in the areas of education, employment and health. He noted that, in Lithuania, women and men had equal access to education and attained high educational qualifications. Women constituted 58.6 per cent of university and 70 per cent of high school graduates. Women's share in the labour force continued to rise: in 1998, women made up 48.5 per cent of the total number of the employed population. However, women had been negatively affected by the economic and financial difficulties in the country, which had led, in many cases, to a change of the nature of employment or loss of jobs. Many women had entered the informal sector or had started their own business. The Government was trying to address the concerns and needs of women in the labour market, including the needs of rural women and women entrepreneurs. In 2000, for instance, the Credit Line was established to assist women in small business. The Law on the National Health System provided for free health care and services for everyone in the national network of health care. All women had free access to maternity and child health care and were entitled to paid ante- and post-natal maternity leave. In addition, either parent was entitled to childcare allowance until the child reached his or her first birthday.

124. The representative informed the Committee that the Government was paying serious attention to the issue of violence against women, especially domestic violence. The Government was working in close collaboration with the local authorities, police and non-governmental organizations to prevent violence against women and to provide comprehensive assistance to the victims of violence. In 1999, the Government, with the support of UNDP, had launched a project on training police officials to deal with those issues. The Police Department had established, in the Academy of Law, a special course on preventive measures to combat violence against women and children. In addition, the Government had translated *Strategies for Confronting Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual*[3] into Lithuanian, and distributed it in secondary schools.

125. The representative informed the Committee that the mass media had started to pay more serious attention to women's issues. To further raise the awareness of the media regarding gender issues, the Office of the Ombudsman, together with UNDP, was organizing a conference, "Men and women: creation of negative stereotypes by mass media", to be held on 30 June 2000.

126. The representative informed the Committee that since 1997 Lithuania had started to compile all statistical data disaggregated by sex in order to show the de facto situation of women and men in all areas of life. Two annual statistical compendiums entitled *Women and Men in Lithuania* were published in 1997 and 1998. The 1999 edition was also completed and ready for publication.

127. The representative noted that Lithuania was making steady progress towards achieving gender equality and advancing the status of women. The Government was committed to continuing its work in that area and to overcoming the obstacles that women of Lithuania were still encountering.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

128. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Lithuania for submitting its initial and second periodic reports, and for engaging in a frank and constructive dialogue with the Committee. The reports follow the guidelines of the Committee and contain good statistical data disaggregated by sex. The Committee also commends the Government's efforts to produce, in a short period of time, qualitative and informative responses to the questions posed by the Committee.

129. The Committee welcomes the fact that the Government of Lithuania followed the recommendations of the Beijing Platform for Action and approved two national action plans for 1996-1997 and 1998-2000, respectively, which are in accordance with the priorities of the Platform for Action.

130. The Committee welcomes the fact that Lithuania has ratified the Convention without reservations, and that it intends to sign the Optional Protocol and to accept article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

Positive aspects

131. The Committee welcomes the fact that the Government of Lithuania puts high priority on a policy

to ensure equal opportunities for men and women. It welcomes the revision of various legal provisions, the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities and the establishment of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman. The Committee also welcomes the broad mandate of the Ombudsman to monitor the implementation of the Law. It commends the fact that the Law's definition of discrimination fully corresponds to the definition articulated in article 1 of the Convention, that it allows for positive discrimination according to article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, prohibits sexual harassment, and allows for administrative sanctions to be imposed on both private and public persons and institutions. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman has close connections with the Lithuanian Parliament, with State institutions and with non-governmental organizations, and that its budget significantly increased in less than a year.

132. The Committee notes with appreciation the incremental development of several components of a national machinery. The Committee commends the creation of a group of women parliamentarians from all political parties, as well as a parliamentary commission on the family and the child. It also welcomes the establishment of a permanent Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the fact that the meetings of the Commission can be attended by the Ombudsman as well as by representatives of non-governmental organizations.

133. The Committee notes with appreciation the efforts by the Government to combat violence against women, especially domestic violence. It commends the creation, with the collaboration of non-governmental organizations, of telephone hot lines and crisis centres to provide information and assistance to women victims of violence. It also commends the training of police officials in this regard.

134. The Committee appreciates the willingness of the Government to address the issues of prostitution and trafficking in women and girls, which has resulted in various changes of and amendments to the Criminal Code of Lithuania, some of which, however, are still to be adopted. It commends the National Programme on Control and Prevention of Prostitution and Trafficking, to be launched soon and to be implemented by ministries and governmental and non-governmental institutions.

135. The Committee notes with satisfaction that both the Government and the Parliament of Lithuania recognize the important role of the increasing number of non-governmental organizations working on women's issues.

136. The Committee notes with satisfaction the efforts of the Government to collect and publish annually all statistical data disaggregated by sex.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

137. The Committee notes that the political and economic transition in the last decade has posed serious challenges to the effective implementation of the Convention, as women have been disproportionately affected by the restructuring processes.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

138. The Committee is concerned about the persistence of traditional stereotypes regarding the role of men and women in the family, in employment and in society. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of targeted educational programmes, mass media campaigns and temporary special measures in education, employment and politics to eliminate these stereotypes. It is also concerned that provisions in the current draft Code of Advertising Ethics may not be sufficient to address advertisements that utilize and support traditional sex-role stereotypes.

139. The Committee urges the Government to design and implement comprehensive programmes in education and the mass media in order to promote roles and tasks of women and men in all sectors of society. It also recommends that the draft Code of Advertising Ethics be amended in order to cover not only the prohibition of the promotion of discrimination against women and men, or of the alleged superiority of one sex over the other, but also of the more subtle utilization of and support for traditional role stereotypes in the family, in employment and in society.

140. The Committee is concerned that a clear understanding of temporary special measures according to article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Lithuanian Law on Equal Opportunities, as well as the reason for their application, seems to be lacking in

large parts of Lithuanian society and in the government bureaucracy.

141. The Committee recommends that the Government raise public awareness about the importance of such measures and programmes by pointing to the positive example of Vilnius University and encourage similar programmes in various areas, especially that of political decision-making. The Committee also recommends that the Government introduce such special provisions in the educational field, including admission to disciplines in which one sex is under-represented, in government commissions and in public administration. Such provisions should be designed with measurable goals or quotas and time lines in order to accelerate the achievement of de facto equality between women and men in those areas.

142. The Committee is concerned about the situation of women in the labour market, and in particular about the fact that the official unemployment statistics do not take account of the hidden unemployment of women or of their informal employment and underemployment. While the official overall unemployment rate of women is slightly lower than that of men, such general statistics hide the fact that there tends to be a higher number of women among the long-term and the higher-educated unemployed, and in the older age groups that more women than men are unemployed.

143. The Committee requests the Government to include precise information and data in its next periodic report on women's unemployment rates differentiated according to age groups and educational and professional levels, as well as on their representation in the various training programmes. It further recommends that the Government design and implement specific targeted programmes for different groups of unemployed women, addressing their training needs in different employment areas with a view to future-oriented jobs. It also recommends the monitoring of the increasing number of women's businesses in regard to their viability.

144. The Committee also notes with concern that the position of women in the labour market is characterized by discrimination, in particular of women with children, and by a strong occupational segregation with a concomitant wage differential. The Committee is also concerned that there may be hidden discrimination against women in the training programmes offered by the Labour Exchange Offices.

145. The Committee recommends that efforts be made to eliminate occupational segregation through efforts in education, training and retraining. There should be additional wage increases in female-dominated sectors of public employment to decrease the wage differential in comparison with male-dominated sectors.

146. The Committee is concerned at the increase of poverty among various groups of women, in particular of female-headed households.

147. The Committee recommends that the Government closely monitor the poverty situation of women of various groups, including those of various ages, and implement effective poverty alleviation programmes.

148. The Committee is concerned that the existing national mechanisms do not have sufficient capacity or funding to promote effectively the advancement of women and gender equality.

149. The Committee requests the Government to consolidate and strengthen the existing governmental national mechanisms for women, including through the provision of financial and human resources to carry out effectively their mandates. It further recommends that the Government continually review the budgetary needs of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman.

150. The Committee expresses its concern about violence against women, especially domestic violence.

151. The Committee urges the Government to amend article 118 of the Criminal Code in order explicitly to define rape as sexual intercourse without consent. The Committee also urges the Government to continue to pay serious attention to domestic violence against women, including through ongoing training of police officials, future lawyers and judges and through easy access to courts by the victims of domestic violence. It recommends the introduction of a specific law prohibiting domestic violence against women, which would provide for protection and exclusion orders and access to legal aid and shelters.

152. The Committee recognizes the efforts made by the Government in addressing the issue of trafficking in women and girls, but notes with concern that the size of the problem is not reflected in the information provided in the report. The Committee draws attention to article 6 of the Convention, and in this regard notes that criminal penalties imposed only on prostitutes entrench sexual exploitation of women.

153. The Committee requests the Government to include in its next periodic report detailed information on the impact and results of the intended legal changes regarding prostitution, as well as of the intended National Programme on Control and Prevention of Prostitution and Trafficking. It also recommends that the Government increase its collaboration with other countries of origin, transit and destination of trafficked women and girls and to report on the results of such collaboration. It further recommends the creation of reintegration programmes for victims of prostitution and trafficking in cooperation with non-governmental organizations.

154. The Committee notes with concern the insufficient funding of non-governmental organizations, including women's non-governmental organizations, which makes it difficult for them to build their capacities to fulfil their various roles and functions in supporting human rights of women.

155. The Committee recommends that the Government develop clear criteria for rendering and ensuring governmental financial support on the national and local level for the work of women's non-governmental organizations. It also recommends that the Government increase awareness among individuals and corporations regarding possible donations to women's organizations.

156. The Committee expresses its concern at the fairly low rate of women holding parliamentary seats and political office at the municipal and national levels.

157. The Committee recommends that the Government strengthen its efforts in offering or supporting special training programmes for current and future women leaders and conduct, on a regular basis, awareness-raising campaigns regarding the importance of women's participation in political decision-making. The Committee also recommends that the Government involve the mass media in promoting positive images of women leaders.

158. The Committee is concerned that the Government has not addressed the health needs of Lithuanian women by taking into account the life-cycle approach recommended by the Beijing Platform for Action and as stated in the Committee's general recommendation 24 on article 12, relating to women and health. The Committee also notes with concern the high rate of abortion among women and a lack of access to various methods of family planning, including contraceptives, especially among women in rural areas. The Committee is concerned with the increase of tuberculosis and mental diseases among women, as well as with the high rate of anaemia among pregnant women.

159. The Committee recommends that the Government fully implement a life-cycle approach to women's health. It further recommends comprehensive research into the specific health needs of women, the financial and organizational strengthening of family planning programmes and the provision of wide access to contraceptives for all women, including rural women. The Committee urges the Government to introduce programmes of sexual and reproductive education for both girls and boys as a regular part of the school curriculum.

160. The Committee expresses its concern with the fact that the Government does not have enough information on the situation of rural women, especially older rural women, as concerns their cash income, health situation, access to free health care services and social and cultural opportunities.

161. The Committee requests the Government to provide more information and data on the situation of rural women in its next periodic report. The Committee recommends that the Government monitor existing programmes and develop additional policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women, ensuring their access to productive resources and capital as well as to health care services and to social and cultural opportunities.

162. The Committee is concerned with the situation of older women, who constitute a large proportion of the population. The Committee recommends that the Government design and implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes that address the specific needs of older women. It also recommends that social workers be provided with gender-sensitive education and training in order to be able to recognize and meet those needs.

163. The Committee urges the Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to deposit as soon as possible, its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the time of meetings of the Committee.

164. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments.

165. The Committee requests the Government to disseminate widely the present concluding comments in Lithuania and to support their public discussion, in order to make politicians and government administrators, women's non-governmental organizations and the public at large aware of the steps required to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the results of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

3. Combined second and third periodic reports

Iraq

166. The Committee considered the combined second and third periodic reports of Iraq (CEDAW/C/IRQ/2-3) at its 468th and 469th meetings, on 14 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.468 and 469).

Introduction by the State party

167. In introducing the report, the representative of Iraq stressed her delegation's desire for a constructive dialogue with the Committee. She noted that according to the most recent census of 1997, women composed 50.3 per cent of the total population of approximately 22 million, which reflected a population growth since 1987 of approximately 3 per cent.

168. The representative informed the Committee of actions taken in her country pursuant to the Convention and the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. These included a seminar in 1994 on the topic "Women and human rights: ways of confronting challenges". The seminar, organized by the Government in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, resulted in the adoption of the Declaration of Baghdad. A national strategy to promote the situation of Iraqi women had also been developed after the Fourth World Conference on Women. Institutional mechanisms had been reinforced to facilitate the strategy's implementation. For instance, a high-level National Committee for the Advancement of Iraqi Women had been established, headed by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and comprising high-level officials from ministries and bodies concerned with the implementation of the national strategy.

169. The representative emphasized that the implementation of the Convention in Iraq should be seen against the background of the circumstances of the country. She recalled paragraph 145 of the Beijing Platform for Action, on the negative impact of economic sanctions on the status of women, and noted that the comprehensive regime of sanctions on Iraq had negatively affected the lives of its people and resulted in a significant increase in child and maternal mortality and cancers, including leukaemia. In that regard, she drew attention to the findings and recommendations in a 1999 UNICEF survey on child and maternal mortality in Iraq.

170. The representative noted that Iraq had experienced over 197,000 air raids since 9 May 1991 which had caused the death of hundreds of civilians and the destruction of critical economic infrastructure. Extreme suffering had been experienced by the general population and among women and children in particular. The absence of governmental control over the north of the country had also impeded the State party's ability to monitor the implementation of international human rights treaties, including the Convention.

171. The representative emphasized the Government's decisive political will to implement the Convention, which was clear from steps such as the accession to the Convention, regular reporting, the formulation of national strategies and the establishment of national mechanisms. The absence of adequate resources and international cooperation had hindered full implementation, and circumstances had forced the State party to change its priorities and shift its main focus to the right of survival, especially for women and children.

172. The representative highlighted several measures introduced to ensure the advancement of women. They included the introduction, by the country's largest political party, of quotas to increase the number of women at the decision-making level, which resulted in a marked increase in the number of women occupying

leadership positions after the 1999 elections. Women currently comprised 8 per cent of members of Parliament, a figure exceeding the Arab country average of 3 per cent. The personal status code had been made more equitable through reform of regulations on alimony payments for women, which had been further reinforced by criminal law. The penal code had also been amended to exclude women from detention for certain crimes.

173. The representative concluded that political will existed at the highest levels in Iraq to ensure the implementation of the Convention, despite the adverse effects of sanctions and the resultant limited resources which prevailed. In that regard, she urged the Committee to take into consideration the grave circumstances and challenges facing her country, which were caused mainly by sanctions, and which affected implementation of the Convention.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

174. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Iraq for submitting its combined second and third periodic report in accordance with the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of periodic reports and with statistical data disaggregated by sex. It welcomes the submission of written replies to the Committee's questions and the oral presentation that further clarified the current situation of women in Iraq. The Committee appreciates the fact that, despite the difficult situation faced by the country, the Government has shown the will to continue the constructive dialogue with the Committee.

Positive aspects

175. The Committee welcomes the Government's stated political will to implement the Convention and notes with appreciation the legislative reforms implemented by the State party, in particular with regard to the Personal Status Code, which brought about a greater degree of women's equality with men, and the Penal Code, which now provides greater protection to women.

176. The Committee commends the Government for adopting, in June 1997, a National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and keeping in mind the provisions of the Convention, as a five-year plan to the year 2005.

177. The Committee welcomes the establishment, in June 1997, of the high-level National Committee for the Advancement of Iraqi Women, the agency concerned with the advancement of women and consisting of representatives of ministries involved in activities of relevance to women, and of the General Federation of Iraqi Women. The Committee welcomes the work of the General Federation of Iraqi Women aimed at implementation of the Convention.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

178. The Committee notes that the effects of sanctions and embargo are reflected in the difficult economic and social situation prevailing in the country, which has had repercussions on the advancement of women and on their socio-economic well-being. The situation impedes the full implementation of the Convention. However, the Committee is of the opinion that, notwithstanding difficulties, the State party remains responsible for implementing its obligations under the Convention in order to ensure elimination of discrimination against women with respect to the rights contained in the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

179. The Committee notes with concern that while the current situation in the State party is not favourable to the advancement of women in some respects, the State party has failed to adopt specific policies and take all possible measures to implement the Convention. The Committee notes in particular the failure of the State party to revoke legislative provisions that discriminate against women.

180. The Committee also notes with concern that discriminatory views and attitudes that impede women's enjoyment of their rights have not been addressed by the State party.

181. The Committee calls on the Government to review discriminatory legislative provisions and to take measures, including temporary special measures, aimed at creating a non-discriminatory legislative and de facto environment for women.

182. The Committee is concerned that while article 19, subparagraph (a), of the Constitution of 1970 provides for equality of all citizens before the law without discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sex, it does not specifically prohibit discrimination that has the effect or purpose of adversely affecting women's human rights. The Committee is also concerned that article 19, subparagraph (b), grants equal opportunities to all citizens "within the limits of the law", thus restricting the guarantee of article 19, subparagraph (a), in particular for women.

183. The Committee calls on the Government to encourage a constitutional amendment which reflects fully article 1 of the Convention. It also encourages the Government to undertake a comprehensive legislative review with a view to bringing all legislation into full conformity with the Convention.

184. The Committee notes with concern that insufficient information is available about progress in the implementation of the national strategy and in particular about steps to measure and evaluate such progress and to identify successful programmes.

185. The Committee urges the Government to put in place a mechanism to provide for the regular evaluation and qualitative and quantitative assessment of progress in the implementation of the national strategy for the advancement of women. It also invites the Government to provide further information on the mandate, annual work plans and major areas of activity of the National Committee for the Advancement of Women in its next report.

186. The Committee is concerned that the State party explicitly ruled out the possibility of withdrawal of its reservations to article 2, subparagraphs (f) and (g), and articles 9 and 16. The Committee expresses its concern at the State party's justification of those reservations as being based on its desire to apply the provisions of the Convention in a manner consistent with Islamic Sharia. In that regard, the Committee draws the attention of the State party to its statement on reservations (see A/53/38/Rev.1, part two, chap. I), and in particular its view that articles 2 and 16 are central to the object and purpose of the Convention, and that, in accordance with article 28, paragraph 2, reservations should be reviewed and modified or withdrawn.

187. The Committee is also concerned that Iraq's nationality law, which is based on the principle that the members of a family should all have the same nationality and that none should have dual nationality or lose their nationality, does not grant women an independent right to acquire, change or retain their nationality or to pass it on to their children.

188. The Committee recommends that the Government of Iraq review its reservations to article 2, subparagraphs (f) and (g), and articles 9 and 16, in the light of the Committee's statement on reservations, assess the justifications for those reservations and modify or withdraw them as soon as possible to ensure full implementation of the Convention.

189. While noting the existence of certain legislative provisions on violence against women, the Committee expresses its concern at the lack of a comprehensive approach to that issue. The Committee is particularly concerned about the lack of data and information on the incidence and types of violence perpetrated against women in the home and in society; social, medical and psychological support available to women subjected to violence; and measures to prosecute and punish perpetrators and to provide legal redress.

190. The Committee requests the Government to provide in its next report a comprehensive picture with regard to violence against women in the State party, including information on legislation, statistical data on the types and incidence of violence against women and the responses to such violence by law enforcement officials, the judiciary, social workers and health-care providers. The Committee urges the Government to encourage and support the establishment of facilities for women victims of domestic violence, such as telephone hotlines and shelters for battered women, and to launch a zero-tolerance campaign on violence against women so as to raise awareness about the problem and the need to combat it effectively.

191. The Committee is concerned at the prevailing view that emphasizes women's stereotypical role in the family and in private life to the detriment of establishing equality of women in all spheres of life. The Committee notes with concern that insufficient attention is being given to modifying harmful traditional and cultural practices, such as polygamy, and stereotypical attitudes that perpetuate discrimination against women.

192. The Committee urges the Government to implement awareness-raising campaigns to change stereotypical and discriminatory attitudes concerning the roles of women and girls, in addition to providing a

non-discriminatory legislative basis. It also urges the Government to work towards the elimination of the practice of polygamy, in light of the Committee's general recommendation 21 on marriage and family relations. It also urges the Government to ensure that gender-sensitive public education campaigns at all levels create a non-discriminatory environment.

193. The Committee is also deeply concerned by the violence against women perpetrated through honour killings.

194. The Committee urges the Government in particular to condemn and eradicate honour killings and ensure that these crimes are prosecuted and punished in the same way as other homicides.

195. While noting that, apparently, there is a quota provision in place in the country's main political party, the Ba'ath Party, to increase the number of women in leadership positions, the Committee expresses its concern about the continuing low representation of women in public life.

196. The Committee calls on the Government to introduce measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and especially to increase the number of women in the political sphere.

197. The Committee notes with concern the level of illiteracy among women, the increasing rate at which girls drop out of secondary and higher education, and the low representation of women in technical schools.

198. The Committee calls on the Government to strengthen efforts to eradicate illiteracy and to ensure primary and secondary education for girls by preventing school dropouts. It further urges the Government to broaden the educational and training opportunities for girls and young women at the secondary and tertiary levels and in technical fields. It urges the Government to give particular attention to ensuring that girls and women have equal access to new specializations, including the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge to participate on a basis of equality with men in the labour market and in the future reconstruction of the country.

199. The Committee expresses its concern about women's low participation in the labour market. It is also concerned at the absence of a law establishing minimum wages, which makes it extremely difficult to determine whether women are being paid equal pay for work of equal value. The Committee is also concerned that the flexibility granted to employers in labour relations has a negative impact on women's employability and security of employment. Differences in maternity benefits granted to women in the public and the private sector are also a cause of concern to the Committee.

200. The Committee urges the Government to ensure that women do not bear a disproportionate portion of the economic difficulties facing the country. In particular, the Committee calls on the Government to ensure that non-discriminatory labour legislation is in place and effectively enforced. The Committee requests the Government to ensure that women's reproductive function does not lead to discrimination against them in employment, job security and social benefits.

201. The Committee recognizes that sanctions have had a negative impact on women and children in areas such as health care, nutrition, employment and other basic social services. The Committee nevertheless is concerned at the failure of the Government to put in place specific and targeted measures to address these problems.

202. The Committee urges the Government to assess the differential impact of sanctions on women and children, especially on particularly vulnerable groups of women, and to put in place measures aimed at countering such a negative impact. In that regard, the Committee urges the Government to use resources available from programmes such as the oil-for-food programme in a manner that directly benefits women, including through diverting resources currently allocated for other purposes.

203. The Committee expresses its concern at the overall health situation of women. It notes the high incidence of maternal mortality and the lack of basic health services, medicines and reproductive health services, including qualified birth attendants. The Committee is particularly concerned that, given the socio-economic difficulties, no measures have been put in place to address the mental and psychological health of women. The Committee is also concerned that no steps have been taken to determine the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country, and that no relevant preventive education and information campaigns aimed at women exist.

204. The Committee urges the Government to put in place mechanisms to provide the greatest possible

protection of women's health rights. It urges the Government to ensure that women and children are effectively targeted so as to benefit from available resources and that such resources are not diverted to other purposes. It calls on the Government to take a holistic view of women's health, in line with the Committee's general recommendation 24 relating to article 12 of the Convention, and to put in place measures to ensure women's mental and psychological well-being.

205. The Committee expresses its concern about the lack of information provided about the situation of rural women and the implementation of article 14 of the Convention.

206. The Committee calls on the Government to provide in its next report a comprehensive picture of the situation of rural women, in particular their educational, health and employment situation, and the impact of traditions and stereotypes on their status.

207. The Committee notes with concern the lack of information on the situation of particularly disadvantaged groups of women, especially women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Kurds, Turkmens and Assyrians.

208. The Committee calls on the Government to address the situation of those groups of women.

209. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in the present concluding comments. It requests the Government to provide information about the mandate, functions and activities of the Human Rights Commission established within the National Assembly with regard to women's enjoyment of their human rights. It also requests that the Government engage in a broad consultative process with women's non-governmental organizations, including those that represent minority women, when preparing its next report.

210. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Iraq of the present concluding comments, in order to make the people of Iraq, and particularly government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women and the future steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the results of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

4. Combined third and fourth periodic reports and fifth periodic reports

Austria

211. The Committee considered the combined third and fourth reports and the fifth periodic reports of Austria (CEDAW/C/AUT/3-4 and 5) at its 470th and 471st meetings, on 15 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.470 and 471).

Introduction by the State party

212. In introducing the reports, the representative of Austria informed the Committee that as a result of restructuring following the formation of Austria's new coalition government in February 2000, the Ministry for Social Security and Generations had been assigned responsibility for the development of women's policy, which had been previously within the framework of the Federal Chancellery. The new Austrian Federal Government emphasized that it considered women's policy to be an integral part of its overall policy and had committed itself to an ambitious women's policy programme. In this regard, the law on equal treatment applicable to the public sector had been amended, inter alia, to shift the burden of proof in sexual harassment cases and to enhance the enforceability and monitoring of the equal treatment obligation. A regional office of the ombudsman's office for equal treatment had been established (the central office had been founded in Vienna in 1991), and further regional offices were planned. Beginning on 1 January 2002 a childcare allowance would be paid to each parent, irrespective of whether they were employed.

213. The representative drew attention to the many initiatives introduced to address violence against women, including information campaigns and the federal law on the protection against family violence, providing for exclusion orders, which had entered into force on 1 May 1997. Seven intervention centres against domestic violence, functioning as contact centres for victims and coordinating bodies with regard to all organizations concerned with the problem, had

been established, and an advisory committee on the prevention of violence had also been set up within the Federal Ministry of the Interior. A series of large-scale training courses had been conducted during the past three years to sensitize all those concerned with domestic violence, and measures were being introduced to support sexually abused children and young people with regard to court proceedings.

214. Measures had also been introduced with regard to trafficking in women, including the creation in Vienna in 1998 of an intervention centre for women victims of trafficking and the introduction of a "humanitarian visa" to allow them to remain in Austria. Austria supported the ongoing negotiations relating to the revised draft Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (A/AC.254/4/Add.3/Rev.7).

215. The representative indicated that an inter-ministerial working group for gender mainstreaming had been established, comprising representatives of all ministries, which would develop and monitor the implementation of strategies for gender mainstreaming. She also noted that Austria had introduced several initiatives to make women aware of the opportunities and risks related to new technology. These included a project to encourage women to take up non-traditional technical professions, especially in regard to technology, and the development of a manual providing practical guidelines for the implementation of measures to increase the participation of women in technical fields.

216. In concluding, the representative informed the Committee that Austria had signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention and would soon be in a position to ratify the instrument, as well as to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention relating to the time of meetings of the Committee. Austria would also shortly remove its reservation to article 7, subparagraph (b), of the Convention in the light of the introduction of the 1998 women's education act providing for access by women to the army.

Concluding comments of the Committee

217. The Committee commends the Government of Austria for the high quality of the written and oral presentation of the combined third and fourth periodic reports and the fifth periodic report.

218. The Committee is gratified that the Government of Austria had sent a large, high-level inter-ministerial delegation headed by the Federal Minister for Social Security and Generations, which established a frank and highly constructive dialogue with the members of the Committee.

219. The Committee commends the Government for announcing its intention to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention in respect of the time of meetings of the Committee. It also welcomes the imminent withdrawal of the reservation to article 7 of the Convention in respect of women and the military. At the same time, it appeals to the Government to make efforts also to withdraw the reservation to article 11 of the Convention in respect of night work.

220. The Committee commends the Government for the central role played by Austria in the elaboration of the Optional Protocol and for having expressed its intention to ratify it in the coming months.

Positive aspects

221. The Committee notes with satisfaction the measures undertaken by Austria to combat violence against women. The Committee commends the federal law on the protection against family violence, which entered into force on 1 May 1997, and created a legal basis for the speedy and efficient protection of victims of domestic violence. It also appreciates in particular the programmes relating to sexual violence against persons with disabilities.

222. The Committee notes with appreciation the various measures of the Government to combat trafficking in women, including the apprehension, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators. It also appreciates Austria's efforts to increase international cooperation in order to address this transnational issue.

223. The Committee welcomes the initiative of the Government to promote the participation of women in the field of the new information and communication technologies, as both consumers and entrepreneurs.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

224. The Committee considers that persisting cultural stereotypes of women as homemakers and child-rearers constitute an impediment to the full implementation of the Convention.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

225. The Committee expresses its concern at the abolition of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. While acknowledging that the new Government has transferred the responsibility for women's and gender issues from the Ministry within the framework of the Federal Chancellery to the Ministry of Social Security and Generations and that it has set up an inter-ministerial coordinating committee on gender mainstreaming, it is concerned that the broad scope of the responsibilities of the latter Ministry will result in giving lesser priority to the elimination of discrimination against women and obstruct the visibility of government policy in that respect.

226. The Committee requests the Government to ensure, on a regular basis, the evaluation and assessment of the gender impact of the federal budget as well as governmental policies and programmes affecting women. It also urges the national machinery for women to increase its cooperation with non-governmental organizations.

227. The Committee is concerned about the situation of migrant women. The Committee urges the Government to facilitate the attainment of work permits by migrant women on an equal basis with migrant men and to establish the conditions needed for their integration into the economic and social life of Austrian society.

228. The Committee is also concerned about the situation of trafficked women. The Committee requests the Government to take responsibility for caring for the human rights of all trafficked women and girls. It also urges the Government to increase its cooperation with countries of origin and other countries of destination so as to prevent trafficking and penalize those who facilitate trafficking.

229. The Committee expresses its concern at women seeking asylum in Austria, and in particular about human rights violations by State officials. The Committee recommends that the Government adopt policies that acknowledge gender-specific grounds for women seeking asylum in Austria, including gender violence and persecution and female genital mutilation.

230. With respect to violence against women, notwithstanding the extensive measures already undertaken by the Government, the Committee urges the Government to ensure ongoing education for law enforcement officials and the judiciary, including their sensitization to violence against women in migrant communities, and to extend such programmes to health professionals. It also recommends that the Government pay particular attention to the physical, emotional and financial abuse of elderly women. It suggests further that programmes of therapy for male offenders be instituted.

231. The Committee expresses concern at the high percentage of the female population in Austria which has no education beyond the compulsory level. It is also concerned with the continuing gender role stereotyping in the area of education and vocational training for girls and boys.

232. The Committee urges the Government to take measures to encourage girls to continue their education beyond compulsory level and particularly in the areas of science and technology. The Committee also calls upon the Government to introduce affirmative action to increase the appointment of women to academic posts at all levels and to integrate gender studies and feminist research in university curricula and research programmes.

233. In the area of women's employment, the Committee is concerned that women continue to remain segregated in low-paid jobs in the labour market.

234. The Committee requests the Government to take action in order to decrease the wage discrepancy between female-dominated jobs and male-dominated jobs, especially in the private sector. It also urges the Federal Government to adopt a proactive comprehensive policy, with appropriate budgetary allocations as incentives to provincial and local authorities, so as to develop childcare facilities that enable women's equal participation in the labour force.

235. The Committee urges the Government to strengthen the powers of the Equal Treatment Commission in order to allow it to be more effective in its efforts to combat discriminatory practices and to guarantee equal opportunity and treatment for women in the workplace.

236. The Committee is concerned about the situation of single women and, in particular, the disadvantages suffered by never-married and divorced elderly women in terms of retirement pensions and social security benefits. The Committee urges the Government to take into consideration current social trends when designing policies so as to meet the needs of the increasing number of single women in the country.

237. The Committee recommends that the Government replicate, at the federal level, the Vienna programme on women's health and intensify efforts to apply a gender perspective in health care by, inter alia, initiating and sponsoring relevant research, taking into account the Committee's General Recommendation 24 on article 12, relating to women and health.

238. The Committee is concerned at the decrease in women's representation in the legislature in the recent elections. The Committee recommends that the Government undertake in this respect temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and consider, inter alia, the use of federal funding for political parties as an incentive for the increased representation of women in Parliament, as well as the application of quotas and numerical goals and measurable targets aimed at increasing women's political participation.

239. The Committee is concerned at the lack of data disaggregated by sex on the impact of policies and programmes. The Committee urges the Government, inter alia, to improve the collection of data on criminal proceedings related to violence against women, to evaluate policy as regards victims of trafficking, to assess the nature and outcome of equal treatment cases in the labour courts and to integrate gender perspectives into health care, taking into account sex-disaggregated data on causes of morbidity and mortality.

240. The Committee commends governmental initiatives to assess gender policies through pilot projects, but is concerned that such initiatives do not go beyond the pilot stage. The Committee urges the Government to apply the results of the projects in ongoing law, policy and programming.

241. The Committee requests the Government to introduce human rights education, and in particular women's human rights education on the basis of the Convention, into school curricula.

242. The Committee calls upon the Government of Austria to include information on the concerns raised in these concluding comments in the next periodic report.

243. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Austria of the present concluding comments so that the people, and, in particular administrators and politicians, are made aware of the steps to be taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women, and the further steps required in that regard. It also requests the Government to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the further actions and initiatives adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

5. Fourth periodic reports

Cuba

244. The Committee considered the fourth periodic report of Cuba (CEDAW/C/CUB/4) at its 474th and 475th meetings, on 19 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.474 and 475).

Introduction by the State party

245. In introducing the report, the representative of Cuba drew attention to the fact that her country had consistently adhered to the letter and spirit of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and upheld its value as an international legal instrument. Likewise, she noted that Cuba had expressed its political will to support the Optional Protocol to the Convention and undertaken a national evaluation of the actions adopted to implement the agreements of the Fourth World Conference on Women. She added that the evaluation showed the advances, the failures and the resulting new priorities on gender issues.

246. The representative informed the Committee that, during the period from 1996 to 2000, Cuba had adopted measures to solve pending problems and to outline national middle and long-term strategies to follow up the process aimed at the achievement of gender equality.

247. The representative stressed that, after the Fourth World Conference on Women, Cuba had implemented a series of actions to publicize the commitments made on the adoption of the Platform for Action among the policy-making State bodies. That wide process of social awareness-raising had culminated in a national seminar entitled "Cuban women from Beijing to 2000", which examined the Platform for Action and elaborated recommendations for future work. The seminar had been a valuable part of the background to the establishment of the National Plan of Action to Follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women, which had been adopted into law in April 1997.

248. The representative informed the Committee that Cuba had strengthened the executive functions of each State body charged with implementing the relevant policies. She also drew attention to those bodies of the State Central Management which were involved in and responsible for the 90 measures included in the Plan. The 90 measures conformed with the national priorities established with regard to women's employment, access to decision-making, the reflection of women's images in the media, community participation in health services, community social work, improvement of legislation, attention to women's human, sexual and reproductive rights and the improvement of research on women and gender relations.

249. The representative indicated that the substantial advances in the implementation of the National Plan of Action was due to the country's gradual and sustained economic recovery, particularly during the last five years. The Cuban gross domestic product (GDP) had risen by 6.2 per cent in 1999, and had been accompanied by a 5.4 per cent rise in job productivity, and 8.8 per cent investment growth.

250. The representative informed the Committee that the continuing growth in the economy ensured a consistent policy of favouring social programmes, particularly those that benefited women and children. She emphasized that the Cuban national budget for social programmes had risen since 1995, and, in the year 2000, the State had devoted 70 per cent of its current expenditure to education, health care, social security, housing maintenance and repair and community services. The representative informed the Committee that, during the seventh Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women, held in March 2000, it had been indicated that women's employment in the civil-State sector had risen from 42.3 per cent in 1995 to 43.6 per cent in 1999. Moreover, in some middle- and higher-level job categories (i.e., technical and professional), women's employment had risen from 63.8 per cent in 1995 to 66.1 per cent in 1999. She also noted that the participation of women in decision-making had increased from 29.8 per cent in 1995 to 32.3 per cent in 1999. She stressed the qualitative and quantitative improvement of women's participation in Parliament, where women represented 27.6 per cent in comparison to the period from 1993 to 1998, when women accounted for 22.8 per cent.

251. The representative underlined the impact of the Helms-Burton Act and the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the Government of the United States of America, and described its differential negative consequences for women and men. She noted that those factors had prevented Cuba from fulfilling the purposes of the National Plan of Action as well as the principles of the Convention. She indicated that, owing to continuing gender stereotypes and traditional sexist behaviour patterns, many women were still responsible for family and children's care, and that the blockade took a particular toll on women who were responsible for productive and social activities in the home. She acknowledged that international solidarity, including through women's organizations, had counteracted some of the negative effects of the blockade and promoted projects for the advancement of women and girls in Cuba.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

252. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Cuba for submitting on time a detailed fourth periodic report containing data disaggregated by sex. It commends the Government for the comprehensive written replies to the Committee's questions, and its comprehensive oral presentation that further clarified recent developments in the State party.

253. The Committee commends the Government of Cuba for having sent a large delegation, headed by the

Vice-Minister for Science, Technology and the Environment, with a high degree of expertise and including officials from various branches of Government and from the Federation of Cuban Women. Their participation enhanced the quality of the constructive dialogue between the State party and the Committee.

Positive aspects

254. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the Government's political will and commitment to implement the Convention under extremely difficult circumstances.

255. The Committee commends the Government for the adoption, at the level of a law, of a National Plan of Action to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women, prepared in a consultative process among governmental bodies and entities of civil society, and containing a large number of actions in various fields to be implemented by various government bodies. It also commends the Government for the legislative changes and programmes implemented since the consideration by the Committee of its third periodic report in 1996, including in direct response to the Committee's concluding comments. The Committee also commends the Government for clearly recognizing the link between the Convention as the legal framework, and the Beijing Platform for Action as the operational policy document, for realizing women's human rights.

256. The Committee welcomes the increase, since 1996, in the women's employment rate in the civil-State sector, which has reached 43.6 per cent, women's participation in the National Assembly at 27.6 per cent, in leadership positions at 32.3 per cent, and in technical and professional mid- and higher-level posts at 66.1 per cent. It welcomes the fact that women constitute 60 per cent of the judiciary. It also welcomes the improvements in women's socio-economic situation as a result of the country's sustained economic recovery in recent years.

257. The Committee commends with appreciation the State party for its encouraging national indicators for social development, especially women's generally high literacy rates, and the favourable indicators in the field of women's health, including access to basic health care, low maternal, infant and women's mortality rates and a decline in abortion rates.

258. The Committee welcomes the fact that Cuba invited the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to visit the country in June 1999.

259. The Committee commends the Government for having signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention in March 2000.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

260. The Committee notes the ongoing economic blockade and its particular effects on women and on the full implementation of the Convention. These effects are compounded by the fact that women remain primarily responsible for household work and are clustered in professions that are seriously affected by the blockade.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

261. The Committee expresses its concern about the persistence of stereotypes concerning the role of women in the family and society and of attitudes and behaviours of machismo in many areas of public and private life. The Committee is concerned that, notwithstanding the Government's recognition of this problem and the implementation of measures to address it, the persistence of such stereotypes continues to be an issue affecting efforts to fully implement the Convention.

262. The Committee calls on the Government to continue to undertake measures to address stereotypical attitudes in Cuban society. In particular, the Committee calls on the Government to continue efforts aimed at increasing women's participation in all areas and at all levels of decision-making, as well as to encourage men to share family responsibilities. It also calls on the Government to continue to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the impact of its measures to identify shortcomings, and adjust and improve these measures accordingly.

263. The Committee expresses its concern that there is insufficient assessment of the question of violence against women, in particular domestic violence, and sexual harassment in the workplace. It notes with concern that no specific laws are in place to penalize domestic violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. It also notes that insufficient statistical data are available about various types of violence against

women, including elderly women and against children. The Committee also notes with concern that there is insufficient information on the response of law enforcement officials, the judiciary and health care providers to such violence.

264. The Committee calls upon the Government to assess, in a comprehensive manner, the possible incidence of violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as, in case of incidents, the root causes of such violence. It invites the Government to increase public awareness of the need to take measures to prevent such violence, to consider launching a zero-tolerance campaign on violence against women, as well as to increase the awareness of public officials and the judiciary about the seriousness of such violence. It also invites the Government to increase the availability of support measures for women victims of domestic violence, such as telephone helplines and shelters for battered women. The Committee invites the Government to provide in its next report data on women's access to the Courts in general, and with regard to violence in particular.

265. The Committee notes with concern that, while prostitution is not a crime, there is little information about the impact of programmes and other measures to prevent women from becoming prostitutes, and to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society. Further efforts are needed to identify the root causes of the increase in prostitution in recent years, and of the effectiveness of measures to counteract this trend.

266. The Committee urges the Government to increase its understanding of the causes of prostitution, and to assess the impact of its preventive and rehabilitative measures with a view to improving their effectiveness, and to bringing them fully into line with article 6 of the Convention. The Committee invites the Government to expand its programmes for women's economic independence in such a manner as to attack the causes of prostitution and to eradicate the need for women to enter into prostitution. It also calls on the Government to include in its next periodic report detailed information on any developments related to preventive and rehabilitative measures taken with regard to prostitutes.

267. The Committee notes with concern that, while the introduction of the option of divorce by consent constitutes a viable alternative to a court-supervised divorce, it may involve inherent risks of disadvantage for women.

268. The Committee encourages the Government to monitor carefully the implementation of divorce by consent, and in particular any negative impact this option might have for women with regard to issues such as alimony payments, custody and maintenance of children and distribution of property.

269. While recognizing the increase since 1996 in women's employment rate in the civil-State sector, the Committee remains concerned that women make up a higher percentage of the unemployed, and at the persistence of obstacles to their full integration in all sectors of the labour market, in particular the joint venture and tourism industry.

270. The Committee calls on the Government to implement temporary special measures targeted at women to reduce the level of unemployment and of disparities in access to some sectors of the labour market. It also recommends that such measures ensure that women benefit equally from the country's economic recovery. The Committee calls on the Government to increase its efforts to create new opportunities for women in non-traditional and high-growth areas, including in new information and communications areas and in the service sector, and to strengthen efforts to ensure that they can take full advantage of the mixed economy, in accordance with their high levels of education and skills.

271. While recognizing the Government's sustained efforts to ensure women's right to health, the Committee underlines the necessity of continued efforts to address HIV/AIDS, and in particular its potential impact on high-risk groups, such as prostitutes and young adults. The Committee is concerned about the occurrence of suicide among older women. The Committee calls on the Government to study the cause of women's suicide with a view to adopting preventive measures.

272. The Committee is concerned about the fact that insufficient information was provided on the situation of rural women.

273. The Committee calls on the Government to provide in its fifth periodic report a comprehensive picture of the situation of rural women, including data disaggregated by sex, and comparing the situation of women in urban areas. It also invites the Government

to provide further information about the system of rural cooperatives and their benefits for women.

274. The Committee requests the Government to provide in its next report information, including statistical data, on the prevalence of tobacco use and alcohol, drug and substance abuse by women of different age groups and measures aimed at preventing and reducing such abuse. It also invites the Government to provide information about the availability of counselling and rehabilitation measures for women drug abusers.

275. The Committee requests that the Government responds in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments.

276. The Committee encourages the Government of Cuba to deposit its acceptance to the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention as soon as possible.

277. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Cuba of the present concluding comments, in order to make the people of Cuba, and particularly Government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de facto equality for women and further steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the further actions and initiatives adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

6. Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports

Romania

278. The Committee considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Romania (CEDAW/C/ROM/4-5) at its 481st and 482nd meetings, on 23 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.481 and 482).

Introduction by the State party

279. Introducing the report, the representative of Romania informed the Committee that the Government adhered to all major international human rights instruments and reporting procedures, and had withdrawn its reservation to article 29 of the Convention ratified in 1981. Specific institutional and legislative steps for the promotion of the human rights of women and equal opportunities for men and women had been made following the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. She also noted that in addition to the positive aspects of the democratic transformation of Romania since 1989, the economic and social costs of the transformation had created some difficulties in the full implementation of the Convention.

280. The representative informed the Committee that efforts were being made to harmonize national legislation with international norms, and that the constitution and existing laws in Romania contained provisions providing equal rights irrespective of gender, including in the areas of marriage, social life and employment, as well as stipulations for paternity leave. Amendments to the Criminal Code to introduce penalties for domestic violence were also being prepared.

281. The representative informed the Committee that institutional structures had been created to promote policies for women in areas such as employment, human rights, social status, family, domestic violence, gender equality and gender mainstreaming. She noted that improved coordination among all public authorities responsible for women's issues were still needed to ensure equal opportunities for women and men, but that an Office of the Advocate of the People, with a Human Rights Ombudsman had been created.

282. The representative informed the Committee that although a high percentage of party members were women, women were not yet equally represented in the higher levels of political decision-making. She noted that only 5.3 per cent of the Members of Parliament were women, and that a draft law regarding equal participation of women at high levels of political parties had been rejected by the Parliament and that measures were still necessary to promote the political participation of women.

283. The representative informed the Committee that domestic violence was an area of special concern, and

that although there were no specific legal provisions regarding domestic violence, such offences were covered under several articles of the Criminal Code and under Law No. 61/1991. Other measures to combat domestic violence had included the creation of centres for family counselling and assistance to victims and a study on domestic violence. Further actions would include studies on the causes and effects of violence against women, legislative improvements to include criminal, civil and administrative penalties for domestic violence and protection of victims, training programmes for police and lawyers and support for civil society in preventing domestic violence.

284. The representative drew attention to the problems of prostitution and international trafficking in women and girls, indicating that although there were no specific legal provisions addressing trafficking in women, proposals to amend the Criminal Code had been submitted to Parliament. Romania was also cooperating with other countries to combat the problem of trafficking in women, and a Regional Centre for Preventing and Combating Transboundary Crime had been set up in Bucharest.

285. The representative informed the Committee that many women were involved in the education system, both as students and teachers, and noted that the enrolment rate of women in higher education had increased. However, few women held top management and administrative positions in education, and the female illiteracy rate was still high: 4.6 per cent in 1997 (compared to 5.0 per cent in 1992). To raise awareness of gender issues, Romania had introduced gender training programmes in the curricula of various universities.

286. The representative informed the Committee that the ongoing economic reforms had had an adverse impact on women because of a rise in unemployment and a reduction in social security. Between 1998 and 1999, the female unemployment rate had increased from 10.5 per cent to 11.4 per cent, and as of April 2000, it was 11.2 per cent. The main areas of employment for women, such as health care, social assistance, education, agriculture and trading, were often lower paid than other sectors. Positive developments had occurred in the private sector, in which an increased number of women were employed. Women were increasingly involved in sectors such as financial, banking and insurance services, which were better paid. The representative indicated that in 1999, women held only one third of the top administrative and business positions and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare had taken steps to improve the employment conditions of women, including the promotion of equal opportunities for women, support for unemployed women, reintegration into the labour market and assistance for the diversification of women's economic activities.

287. The representative informed the Committee that the life expectancy of women was higher than that of men, but that heart disease and cancer were the most common causes of death among women. The maternal mortality rate had dropped since the legalization of abortion in 1989, although the increased number of abortions constituted a concern. The Ministry of Health had established a national family planning programme in 1992 and a National Strategy for the Promotion of Reproductive Health to inform the population about modern birth control methods and healthy sexual practices. From 1997, the health care system had undergone reforms, and a number of mother and child protection measures had been adopted. In addition, a National Multi-Sectoral Anti-AIDS Commission had been created to find solutions to HIV-associated problems and an action plan on women's rights to health and reproductive health was to be implemented in cooperation with trade unions. A legal guide on the protection of pregnant employees at the workplace was also being prepared.

288. To protect children, including the girl child, Romania had adopted a strategy on child welfare for 2000-2003, establishing general principles as well as concrete objectives and activities for protecting the child. The representative also informed the Committee that a National Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights had been established.

289. The representative informed the Committee that there was an increased number of non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, in Romania, and stressed the importance of collaboration between the Government and civil society in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality. The representative reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the full implementation of the Convention, and indicated that it had been inspired by the new initiatives for the advancement of women adopted at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly held in June 2000. She also informed the Committee that Romania had started the

domestic procedures for the signature and ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

Concluding comments of the Committee

Introduction

290. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Romania for submitting its combined fourth and fifth periodic reports. It commends the Government for the comprehensive written replies to the Committee's questions, which also included data disaggregated by sex, and its oral presentation, both of which provided additional information on the current situation of the implementation of the Convention. It appreciates the manner in which the State party identified areas requiring further progress.

291. The Committee commends the Government of Romania for having sent a high-level delegation, headed by the Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, including officials from several branches of Government and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The Committee appreciates the open, frank and sincere dialogue that took place between the delegation and the members of the Committee.

292. The Committee welcomes the Government's statement that the domestic procedures for the signature and ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention have already started, and looks forward to the early completion of these procedures by the State party.

Positive aspects

293. The Committee commends the Government for the efforts undertaken, in particular since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, to implement the Convention and to harmonize Romanian law and policy on gender equality and women's equal opportunities with the provisions of the Convention.

294. The Committee welcomes the entry into force, in December 1999, of the law on paternal leave aimed at strengthening the principle of sharing of responsibilities in the family and society.

295. The Committee expresses its appreciation for efforts under way to reform the Romanian legislative framework with a view to eliminating remaining legislative gaps and discriminatory provisions and achieving equality between women and men. It welcomes in particular the Government's efforts to prepare a law on equal opportunities for women and men, and to seek amendments to the Criminal Code with regard to domestic violence and trafficking in women.

296. The Committee welcomes the establishment, in 1998, of the Office of the Advocate of the People with the functions of human rights ombudsman, empowered to protect the human rights of women and children including in the family.

297. The Committee welcomes the Government's open and cooperative attitudes towards the ever-increasing number of non-governmental organizations and the joint efforts undertaken between the Government and actors of civil society to promote implementation of the Convention.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

298. The Committee notes that the political and economic transformations which Romania has been undergoing since 1989 continue to pose major challenges to the full implementation of the Convention, especially in the areas of employment and health.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

299. The Committee, while noting the reforms and plans already in place, is concerned at the overall pace of legislative and policy change in the State party since the consideration of the third periodic report in 1993.

300. The Committee calls on the Government to recognize the urgency of the needed legislative and policy changes, and to place the highest priority on the adoption of the proposed legislation on equal opportunities and on domestic violence and trafficking in women. It also calls on the Government to make gender equality a priority and to develop a holistic and integrated policy for the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of equality between women and men, including a timetable to monitor and evaluate progress in this regard. It urges the Government to consider the adequacy and funding of the national machinery for the advancement of women in leading this effort, including coordination within the Government and with organizations of civil society.

awareness-raising and mobilization of public opinion in favour of equality measures and elimination of stereotypes.

301. The Committee is concerned that stereotypical attitudes about the roles of women and men in the family and society are reflected in women's low level of representation in decision-making at all levels and in all areas.

302. The Committee calls on the Government to increase its efforts at combating stereotypical attitudes. It urges the Government to implement temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to increase the number of women in all decision-making posts, including in Government and Parliament. It invites the Government to place priority on the review and revision of teaching materials, textbooks and curricula, especially for primary- and secondary-level education.

303. The Committee is concerned at the continuing stereotypical and sexist portrayal of women in the media, especially in advertising. The Committee calls on the Government to encourage the media to contribute to the societal effort at overcoming such attitudes, to create opportunities for a positive, non-traditional portrayal of women and encourage and facilitate the use of self-regulatory mechanisms in the media to reduce discriminatory and stereotypical portrayals of women.

304. The Committee, while welcoming the fact that in accordance with article 20 of the Constitution, the Convention is integrated into domestic legislation and takes precedence over such legislation, is concerned that there is a lack of familiarity among the judiciary about the opportunities created by article 20 of the Constitution for the application of the Convention in domestic decision-making.

305. The Committee encourages the Government to ensure that law school curricula and continuing judicial education include the Convention and its applicability at the domestic level. It invites the Government to provide information, in its next report, about complaints filed in courts based on the Convention, as well as about any court decisions that referred to the Convention.

306. The Committee, while noting the Government's recognition of the problem, expresses its concern about the increase in violence against women. It is concerned about the absence of legislation criminalizing domestic violence, including marital rape, and the recognition of the defence of a so-called "reparatory marriage" in the Criminal Code, which eliminates criminal liability of a rapist if the rape victim consents to marry him. It is also concerned that there is no legislation concerning sexual harassment.

307. The Committee calls on the Government to make violence against women in all its forms and in the light of the Committee's general recommendation 19 on violence against women a crime adequately punishable by law. In particular, the Committee urges the Government to collect statistical data disaggregated by age on the incidence and type of such violence, including domestic violence. It recommends legislation and measures to ensure that women victims of domestic violence have immediate means of redress and protection. It also calls on the Government to expand its zero-tolerance campaign on violence against women so as to make such violence socially and morally unacceptable. It also recommends that measures be taken to ensure that law enforcement officials, the judiciary and health-care providers are aware that violence against women, including domestic violence, constitutes an infringement of the human rights of women under the Convention that must be prosecuted with the seriousness and speed it deserves.

308. The Committee, while appreciating the Government's efforts at combating trafficking in women, notes with concern that trafficking has expanded in Romania as a country both of origin and of transit.

309. The Committee recommends that urgent further steps be taken by the State party to prevent and eliminate trafficking in women, especially through a firm anchoring of this crime in legislation. This should include increased cross-border and international cooperation, especially with recipient countries, to eliminate the incidence of trafficking and to prosecute traffickers. It also recommends that the State party focus on the causes of trafficking through measures aimed at poverty alleviation and women's economic empowerment. It encourages the Government to assist victims through counselling and reintegration. It also recommends that the Government pay due attention to article 6 of the Convention in the ongoing debate about the legislative approach to prostitution.

310. The Committee expresses its concern at the high rate of illiteracy of women over 50 years of age and the extremely wide gap in illiteracy between the urban and rural population, as well as the high dropout rates for girls at secondary level. The Committee is also concerned that, while the number of women working in the education sector is high, the percentage of women in administrative and decision-making positions in this sector is low.

311. The Committee recommends that measures be taken to increase the literacy levels of older women, and to reduce the literacy gap between urban and rural women. Efforts should also be made to ensure that education, including continuing education and adult literacy programmes, are targeted to women and include training in new information and communications technologies to provide women and girls with the skills required in a knowledge-based economy.

312. The Committee is concerned about the situation of women in the labour market, especially women's higher unemployment rates, the decrease in women's share in the economically active population and the concentration of women particularly in low-paid occupational areas and sectors. The Committee is also concerned about the high percentage of women working as unpaid family workers, especially in rural areas.

313. The Committee recommends that the Government's labour market and employment policies explicitly address the situation of women workers in order to ensure that women do not carry a disproportionate share of the burden of the transition to a market-based economy. It recommends that urgent targeted measures be put in place to facilitate women's entry into new growth sectors of the economy, including women's entrepreneurship, and to ensure that women's health and retirement benefits are protected. It also encourages the Government to ensure that women can take full advantage of jobs created by foreign investment, ensuring non-discriminatory protection of their rights. It recommends that the Government seek the adoption, as a matter of priority, of a forward-looking equal opportunities law that extends to the private sector and includes the creation of a specific office of ombudsman for equal opportunities for women, with powers to receive complaints of violations of the laws on equal opportunities and to investigate discriminatory situations experienced by women.

314. The Committee expresses its concern about the health situation of women, especially women's reproductive health. While appreciating recent declines in maternal and child mortality rates, these indicators are still high compared to other countries in the region. It is especially concerned about the abortion rates and the use of abortion as a means of fertility control. It is also concerned about the increase in HIV/AIDS infection rates and in sexually transmitted diseases. The Committee expresses its concern about the situation of the environment, including industrial accidents and their impact on women's health.

315. The Committee, while commending the Government for maintaining a system of universal free health care, recommends that increased efforts be placed on improving women's reproductive health. In particular, it calls on the Government to improve the availability, acceptability and use of modern means of birth control to avoid the use of abortion as a method of family planning. It encourages the Government to include sex education systematically in schools, including vocational training schools. It also urges the Government to target high risk groups for HIV/AIDS prevention strategies and strategies to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. It encourages the Government to increase its cooperation with non-governmental organizations and international organizations in order to improve the general health situation of Romanian women and girls. It also requests that the Government provide in its next report detailed information on women's tobacco use and statistics on their alcohol, drug and other substance abuse.

316. The Committee is concerned about the growing number of elderly women living in poverty.

317. The Committee, while appreciating the adoption of the law on pensions and the law on assistance for the elderly, calls upon the Government to seek, without delay, the adoption of the proposed Social Security Code, which will include social assistance for persons without pension benefits, mostly elderly women in need.

318. The Committee is concerned at the different age of marriage established in the Family Code for boys and girls, and that marriages of girl children can be legalized in contravention of article 16 of the Convention. The Committee is also concerned that

despite the decrease in marriages and a growing incidence of cohabitation, the rights of women in cohabitation are not protected by the legal system.

319. The Committee recommends that the Government take action to bring its legislation on the marriage age for women and men into full conformity with the Convention, taking into consideration the Committee's general recommendation 21. The Committee invites the Government to consider how women's rights, including with regard to alimony and child custody, can be protected following dissolution of domestic partnerships.

320. The Committee encourages the Government to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the time of meetings of the Committee.

321. The Committee requests that the Government respond in its next periodic report to the specific issues raised in these concluding comments. It further requests the Government to provide in its next report an assessment of the impact of measures taken to implement the Convention.

322. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Romania of the present concluding comments, in order to make the people of Romania, and particularly government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de facto equality for women and further steps that are required in that regard. It also requests the Government to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the results of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

Chapter V
Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

323. The Committee considered ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee (agenda item 6) at its 467th and 485th meetings, on 12 and 30 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.467 and 485).

324. The item was introduced by the Chief of the Women's Rights Unit of the Division for the Advancement of Women, who introduced the report of the Secretariat (CEDAW/C/2000/II/4). She also drew attention to the working paper containing proposals on the draft rules of procedure (CEDAW/C/2000/I/WG.I/WP.1) and the working paper on proposed procedures to be used by the Committee with respect to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, prepared by Silvia Cartwright (CEDAW/C/2000/II/WP.2).

Action taken by the Committee under agenda item 6

1. Rules of procedure

325. The Committee adopted the revised rules of procedure as to substance, but subject to editing by the Secretariat, in consultation with Ms. Cartwright, with a view to final adoption at its twenty-fourth session in January/February 2001 (see decision 23/I).

2. Optional protocol to the Convention

326. The Committee discussed the working paper on proposed procedures relating to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, including the respective responsibilities of the Committee and the Secretariat. The Committee agreed to continue its consideration of proposed procedures at its twenty-fourth session on the basis of the working paper and discussions held during the twenty-third session.

3. Approaches to be taken with regard to States parties with overdue reports

327. The Committee discussed proposed approaches to be taken with regard to States parties with overdue reports and decided, on an exceptional basis and as a temporary measure, that States parties with overdue reports should be invited to combine these in a single document (see decision 23/II). The Committee agreed to continue consideration of further approaches to be taken to encourage States parties to fulfil their reporting obligations at its twenty-fourth session.

4. Members of the pre-session working group for the twenty-fifth session

328. The Committee decided that the members of the pre-session working group and their alternates for the twenty-fifth session should be:

Members

Charlotte Abaka (Africa)

Savitri Goonesekere (Asia)

Ivanka Corti (Europe)

Rosalyn Hazelle (Latin America and the Caribbean)

Alternates

Emna Aouij (Africa)

Rosario Manalo (Asia)

Carmel Shalev (Europe)

Zelmira Regazzoli (Latin America and the Caribbean)

5. Reports to be considered at future sessions

329. The Committee decided that it would consider the following reports at its twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth sessions:

Twenty-fourth session

Initial reports

Burundi

Kazakhstan

Maldives

Uzbekistan

Combined second, third and fourth periodic reports

Jamaica

Third and fourth periodic reports

Finland

Combined third and fourth periodic reports

Mongolia

Third periodic report and combined fourth and fifth periodic reports

Egypt

Twenty-fifth session

Initial reports

Singapore

Second periodic reports

Guyana

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Netherlands

Viet Nam

Fourth periodic reports

Sweden

Fourth and fifth periodic reports

Nicaragua

In the event that one of the above-mentioned States parties should be unable to present its report, the Committee will consider the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Iceland, or the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Zambia.

Twenty-sixth session

Subject to the implementation of suggestion 23/I, which concerns the possibility of convening the twenty-sixth session outside United Nations Headquarters, the reports to be considered by the Committee would be:

Second periodic reports

Equatorial Guinea

Combined third and fourth periodic reports

Iceland

Sri Lanka

Fourth periodic reports

Portugal

Fifth periodic reports

Russian Federation

In the event that one of the above-mentioned States parties should be unable to present its report, the

Committee will consider the third and fourth periodic reports of Zambia, or the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Ukraine, or the fifth periodic report of Denmark.

6. Dates of the twenty-fourth session of the Committee

330. Consistent with the calendar of conferences for 2001, the twenty-fourth session of the Committee should be held from 15 January to 2 February 2001. The pre-session working group for the twenty-fifth session will meet from 5 to 9 February 2001.

Chapter VI
Implementation of article 21 of the Convention

331. The Committee considered the implementation of article 21 of the Convention (agenda item 5) at its 467th and 485th meetings, on 12 and 30 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.467 and 485).

332. The item was introduced by the Chief of the Women's Rights Unit, who introduced a note by the Secretary-General on reports of the specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities (CEDAW/C/2000/II/3 and Add.1-4).

Action taken by the Committee under agenda item 5

1. General recommendation on article 4 of the Convention

333. The Committee discussed its long-term programme of work with respect to general recommendations under article 21 of the Convention, and decided to begin work, at its twenty-fourth session in January/February 2001, on a general recommendation with regard to article 4 of the Convention concerning temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women (see decision 23/III).

2. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

334. The Committee discussed the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to be held in South Africa from 31 August to 7 September 2001. The Committee agreed to nominate from among its members a focal point with regard to the Conference who should prepare a draft statement for adoption by the Committee and submission to the preparatory committee for the Conference. The Committee requested the Secretariat to provide support to the focal point in the preparation of the statement. The Committee also requested its Chairperson to request the support of the Secretary-General of the Conference with regard to the Committee's participation in the Conference.

Chapter VII
Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session

335. The Committee considered the provisional agenda for its twenty-fourth session at its 485th meeting, on 30 June 2000 (see CEDAW/C/SR.485). The Committee adopted the following provisional agenda:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions of the Committee.
4. Consideration of reports submitted under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
5. Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
6. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee.
7. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session.

8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twenty-fourth session.

Chapter VIII
Adoption of the report

336. At its 485th meeting, on 30 June 2000, the Committee adopted the report on its twenty-third session (CEDAW/C/2000/II/L.1 and CEDAW/C/2000/II/CRP.3 and Add.1-6), as orally amended.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38* and corrigendum (A/45/38 and Corr.1), paras. 28-31.

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.IV.1.

Annex I

States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as at 1 August 2000

States parties	Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession	Date of entry into force
Albania	11 May 1994[a]	10 June 1994
Algeria	22 May 1996[a, b]	21 June 1996
Andorra	15 January 1997[a]	14 February 1997
Angola	17 September 1986[a]	17 October 1986
Antigua and Barbuda	1 August 1989[a]	31 August 1989
Argentina	15 July 1985[b]	14 August 1985
Armenia	13 September 1993[a]	13 October 1993
Australia	28 July 1983[b]	27 August 1983
Austria	31 March 1982[b]	30 April 1982
Azerbaijan	10 July 1995[a]	9 August 1995
Bahamas	6 October 1993[a]	5 November 1993
Bangladesh	6 November 1984[a, b]	6 December 1984
Barbados	16 October 1980	3 September 1981
Belarus	4 February 1981[c]	3 September 1981
Belgium	10 July 1985[b]	9 August 1985
Belize	16 May 1990	15 June 1990
Benin	12 March 1992	11 April 1992
Bhutan	31 August 1981	30 September 1981
Bolivia	8 June 1990	8 July 1990
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 September 1993[d]	1 October 1993
Botswana	13 August 1996[a]	12 September 1996
Brazil	1 February 1984[b]	2 March 1984
Bulgaria	8 February 1982[c]	10 March 1982
Burkina Faso	14 October 1987[a]	13 November 1987
Burundi	8 January 1992	7 February 1992
Cambodia	15 October 1992[a]	14 November 1992
Cameroon	23 August 1994[a]	22 September 1994
Canada	10 December 1981[c]	9 January 1982
Cape Verde	5 December 1980[a]	3 September 1981
Central African Republic	21 June 1991[a]	21 July 1991
Chad	9 June 1995[a]	9 July 1995
Chile	7 December 1989	6 January 1990
China	4 November 1980[b]	3 September 1981
Colombia	19 January 1982	18 February 1982
Comoros	31 October 1994[a]	30 November 1994
Congo	26 July 1982	25 August 1982
Costa Rica	4 April 1986	4 May 1986
Côte d'Ivoire	19 December 1995[a]	17 January 1996
Croatia	9 September 1992[d]	9 October 1992
Cuba	17 July 1980[b]	3 September 1981
Cyprus	23 July 1985[a, b]	22 August 1985

State party	Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession	Date of entry into force
Czech Republic[c]	22 February 1993[3]	24 March 1993
Democratic Republic of the Congo[1]	17 October 1986	16 November 1986
Denmark	21 April 1983	21 May 1983
Djibouti	2 December 1998[6]	1 January 1999
Dominica	15 September 1980	1 September 1981
Dominican Republic	2 September 1982	2 October 1982
Ecuador	9 November 1981	9 December 1981
Egypt	18 September 1981[3]	18 October 1981
El Salvador	19 August 1981[3]	18 September 1981
Equatorial Guinea	23 October 1984[3]	22 November 1984
Eritrea	5 September 1995[6]	5 October 1995
Estonia	21 October 1991[3]	20 November 1991
Ethiopia	10 September 1981[3]	10 October 1981
Fiji	28 August 1995[3,7]	27 September 1995
Finland	4 September 1986	4 October 1986
France	14 December 1983[8,9]	13 January 1984
Gabon	21 January 1983	20 February 1983
Gambia	16 April 1993	16 May 1993
Georgia	26 October 1994[6]	25 November 1994
Germany[4]	10 July 1985[3]	9 August 1985
Ghana	2 January 1986	1 February 1986
Greece	7 June 1983	7 July 1983
Grenada	30 August 1990	29 September 1990
Guatemala	12 August 1982	11 September 1982
Guinea	9 August 1982	8 September 1982
Guinea-Bissau	23 August 1985	22 September 1985
Guyana	17 July 1980	3 September 1981
Haiti	20 July 1981	3 September 1981
Honduras	3 March 1983	2 April 1983
Hungary	22 December 1980	1 September 1981
Iceland	18 June 1985	18 July 1985
India	9 July 1993[3]	8 August 1993
Indonesia	13 September 1984[3]	13 October 1984
Iraq	13 August 1986[3,5]	12 September 1986
Ireland	23 December 1985[3,5]	22 January 1986
Israel	3 October 1991[6]	2 November 1991
Italy	10 June 1985[3]	10 July 1985
Jamaica	19 October 1984[3]	18 November 1984
Japan	25 June 1985	25 July 1985
Jordan	1 July 1992[6]	31 July 1992
Kazakhstan	26 August 1998[6]	25 September 1998
Kenya	9 March 1984[3]	8 April 1984
Kuwait	2 September 1994[6]	2 October 1994
Kyrgyzstan	10 February 1997[6]	12 March 1997
Lao People's Democratic Republic	14 August 1981	13 September 1981
Latvia	14 April 1992[3]	14 May 1992

States parties	Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession	Date of entry into force
Lebanon	21 April 1997[a, b]	21 May 1997
Lesotho	22 August 1995[a, b]	21 September 1995
Liberia	17 July 1984[a]	16 August 1984
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	16 May 1989[a, b]	15 June 1989
Liechtenstein	22 December 1995[a, c]	21 January 1996
Lithuania	18 January 1994[a]	17 February 1994
Luxembourg	2 February 1989[b]	4 March 1989
Madagascar	17 March 1989	16 April 1989
Malawi	12 March 1987[a, c]	11 April 1987
Malaysia	5 July 1995[a, b]	4 August 1995
Maldives	1 July 1993[a, b]	31 July 1993
Mali	10 September 1985	10 October 1985
Malta	8 March 1991[a, b]	7 April 1991
Mauritius	9 July 1984[a, c]	8 August 1984
Mexico	23 March 1981[b]	3 September 1981
Mongolia	20 July 1981[c]	3 September 1981
Morocco	21 June 1993[a, b]	21 July 1993
Mozambique	16 April 1997[a]	16 May 1997
Myanmar	22 July 1997[a, b]	21 August 1997
Namibia	23 November 1992[a]	23 December 1992
Nepal	22 April 1991	22 May 1991
Netherlands	23 July 1991[b]	22 August 1991
New Zealand	10 January 1985[b, c]	9 February 1985
Nicaragua	27 October 1981	26 November 1981
Niger	8 October 1999[a]	7 November 1999
Nigeria	13 June 1985	13 July 1985
Norway	21 May 1981	3 September 1981
Pakistan	12 March 1996[a, b]	11 April 1996
Panama	29 October 1981	28 November 1981
Papua New Guinea	12 January 1995[a]	11 February 1995
Paraguay	6 April 1987[a]	6 May 1987
Peru	13 September 1982	13 October 1982
Philippines	5 August 1981	4 September 1981
Poland	30 July 1980[c]	3 September 1981
Portugal	30 July 1980	3 September 1981
Republic of Korea	27 December 1984[b, c]	26 January 1985
Republic of Moldova	1 July 1994[a]	31 July 1994
Romania	7 January 1982[b]	6 February 1982
Russian Federation	23 January 1981[c]	3 September 1981
Rwanda	2 March 1981	3 September 1981
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 April 1985[a]	25 May 1985
Saint Lucia	8 October 1982[a]	7 November 1982
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	4 August 1981[a]	3 September 1981
Samoa	25 September 1992[a]	25 October 1992
Senegal	5 February 1985	7 March 1985
Seychelles	5 May 1992[a]	4 June 1992
Sierra Leone	11 November 1988	11 December 1988

States parties	Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification/accession	Date of entry into force
Singapore	5 October 1995[a, b]	4 November 1995
Slovakia[c]	28 May 1993[c, d]	27 June 1993
Slovenia	6 July 1992[d]	5 August 1992
South Africa	15 December 1995[a]	14 January 1996
Spain	5 January 1984[b]	4 February 1984
Sri Lanka	5 October 1981	4 November 1981
Suriname	1 March 1993[a]	31 March 1993
Sweden	2 July 1980	3 September 1981
Switzerland	27 March 1997[a]	26 April 1997
Tajikistan	26 October 1993[a]	25 November 1993
Thailand	9 August 1985[a, b, c]	8 September 1985
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	18 January 1994[d]	17 February 1994
Togo	26 September 1983[a]	26 October 1983
Trinidad and Tobago	12 January 1990[b]	11 February 1990
Tunisia	20 September 1985[b]	20 October 1985
Turkey	20 December 1985[a, b]	19 January 1986
Turkmenistan	1 May 1997[a]	31 May 1997
Tuvalu	6 October 1999[a]	5 November 1999
Uganda	22 July 1985	21 August 1985
Ukraine	12 March 1981[c]	3 September 1981
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 April 1986[b]	7 May 1986
United Republic of Tanzania	20 August 1985	19 September 1985
Uruguay	9 October 1981	8 November 1981
Uzbekistan	19 July 1995[a]	18 August 1995
Vanuatu	8 September 1995[a]	8 October 1995
Venezuela	2 May 1983[b]	1 June 1983
Viet Nam	17 February 1982[b]	19 March 1982
Yemen[h]	30 May 1984[a, b]	29 June 1984
Yugoslavia	26 February 1982	28 March 1982
Zambia	21 June 1985	21 July 1985
Zimbabwe	13 May 1991[a]	12 June 1991

[a] Accession.

[b] Declarations and reservations.

[c] Reservation subsequently withdrawn.

[d] Succession.

[e] Before becoming separate States on 1 January 1993, the Czech Republic and Slovakia formed part of Czechoslovakia, which State had ratified the Convention on 16 February 1982.

[f] Effective 17 May 1997, Zaire was renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo.

[g] With effect from 3 October 1990, the German Democratic Republic (which ratified the Convention on 9 July 1980) and the Federal Republic of Germany (which ratified the Convention on 10 July 1985) united to form one sovereign State, which acts in the United Nations under the designation "Germany".

[h] On 22 May 1990, Democratic Yemen and Yemen merged to form a single State, which acts in the United Nations under the designation "Yemen".

Annex II

States parties that have deposited with the Secretary-General instruments of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention

States parties	*Acceptance date*
Australia	4 June 1998
Brazil	5 March 1997
Canada	3 November 1997
Chile	8 May 1998
Denmark	12 March 1996
Finland	18 March 1996
France	8 August 1997
Guatemala	3 June 1999
Italy	31 May 1996
Liechtenstein	15 April 1997
Madagascar	19 July 1996
Malta	5 March 1997
Mexico	16 September 1996
Mongolia	19 December 1997
Netherlands	10 December 1997[a]
New Zealand	26 September 1996
Norway	29 March 1996
Panama	5 November 1996
Republic of Korea	12 August 1996
Sweden	17 July 1996
Switzerland	2 December 1997
Turkey	9 December 1999
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	19 November 1997[b]

[a] For the Kingdom in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.
[b] For the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the British Virgin Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Annex III

States parties that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol

States parties	*Date signed*	*Ratification, accession*
1. Argentina	28 February 2000	
2. Austria	10 December 1999	
3. Azerbaijan	6 June 2000	
4. Belgium	10 December 1999	
5. Benin	25 May 2000	
6. Bolivia	10 December 1999	
7. Bulgaria	6 June 2000	
8. Chile	10 December 1999	
9. Colombia	10 December 1999	
10. Costa Rica	10 December 1999	
11. Croatia	5 June 2000	
12. Cuba	17 March 2000	
13. Czech Republic	10 December 1999	
14. Denmark	10 December 1999	31 May 2000
15. Dominican Republic	14 March 2000	
16. Ecuador	10 December 1999	
17. Finland	10 December 1999	
18. France	10 December 1999	9 June 2000
19. Germany	10 December 1999	
20. Ghana	24 February 2000	
21. Greece	10 December 1999	
22. Iceland	10 December 1999	
23. Indonesia	28 February 2000	
24. Italy	10 December 1999	
25. Liechtenstein	10 December 1999	
26. Luxembourg	10 December 1999	
27. Mexico	10 December 1999	
28. Namibia	19 May 2000	26 May 2000
29. Netherlands	10 December 1999	
30. Norway	10 December 1999	
31. Panama	9 June 2000	
32. Paraguay	28 December 1999	
33. Philippines	21 March 2000	
34. Portugal	16 February 2000	
35. Senegal	10 December 1999	26 May 2000
36. Slovakia	5 June 2000	

States parties	*Date signed*	*Ratification, accession*
37. Slovenia	10 December 1999	
38. Spain	14 March 2000	
39. Sweden	10 December 1999	
40. Thailand	14 June 2000	14 June 2000
41. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3 April 2000	
42. Uruguay	9 May 2000	
43. Venezuela	17 March 2000	

Annex IV

Documents before the Committee at its twenty-second and twenty-third sessions

Document number	*Title or description*
A. Twenty-second session	
CEDAW/C/2000/I/1	Provisional agenda and annotations
CEDAW/C/2000/I/2	Report of the Secretary-General on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention
CEDAW/C/2000/I/3	Note by the Secretary-General on reports of specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities
CEDAW/C/2000/I/3/Add.1	Report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
CEDAW/C/2000/I/3/Add.2	Report of the World Health Organization
CEDAW/C/2000/I/3/Add.3	Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
CEDAW/C/2000/I/3/Add.4	Report of the International Labour Organization
CEDAW/C/2000/I/4	Report of the Secretariat on ways and means of improving the work of the Committee
CEDAW/C/2000/I/5	Report of the Secretariat on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW/C/1997/WG.I/WP.1	Draft rules of procedure
CEDAW/C/2000/I/WG.I/WP.1	Proposals on the draft rules of procedure
Reports of States parties	
CEDAW/C/IND/1	Initial report of India
CEDAW/C/MMR/1	Initial report of Myanmar
CEDAW/C/JOR/1 and 2	Initial report and second periodic report of Jordan

Document number	*Title or description*
CEDAW/C/ZAR/1, 2 and 2/Add.1 and Corr.1 and CEDAW/C/COD/1	Initial report and second and third periodic reports of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
CEDAW/C/BFA/2-3	Combined second and third periodic reports of Burkina Faso
CEDAW/C/DEU/2-3 and 4	Combined second and third periodic reports and fourth periodic report of Germany
CEDAW/C/BLR/3	Third periodic report of Belarus
CEDAW/C/LUX/3 and Add.1	Third periodic report of Luxembourg

Document number	*Title or description*
B. Twenty-third session	
CEDAW/C/2000/II/1	Provisional agenda
CEDAW/C/2000/II/2	Report of the Secretary-General on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention
CEDAW/C/2000/II/3	Note by the Secretary-General on reports of specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities
CEDAW/C/2000/II/3/Add.1	Report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
CEDAW/C/2000/II/3/Add.2	Report of the World Health Organization
CEDAW/C/2000/II/3/Add.3	Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
CEDAW/C/2000/II/3/Add.4	Report of the International Labour Organization
CEDAW/C/2000/II/4	Report of the Secretariat on ways and means of improving the work of the Committee
CEDAW/C/1997/WG.I/WP.1	Draft rules of procedure
CEDAW/C/2000/I/WG.I/WP.1	Proposals on the draft rules of procedure
CEDAW/C/2000/II/WP.2	Report on the Optional Protocol to the Convention
Reports of States parties	
CEDAW/C/CMR/1	Initial report of Cameroon
CEDAW/C/MDA/1	Initial report of the Republic of Moldova
CEDAW/C/LTU/1 and 2	Initial report and second periodic report of Lithuania
CEDAW/C/IRQ/2-3	Combined second and third periodic reports of Iraq
CEDAW/C/AUT/3-4 and 5	Combined third and fourth periodic reports and fifth periodic reportof Austria
CEDAW/C/CUB/4	Fourth periodic report of Cuba
CEDAW/C/ROM/4-5	Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Romania

Annex V

Membership of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Name of member	*Country of nationality*
Charlotte Abaka**	Ghana
Ayse Feride Acar*	Turkey
Emna Aouij**	Tunisia
Carlota Bustelo García del Real*	Spain
Silvia Rose Cartwright*	New Zealand
Ivanka Corti**	Italy
Feng Cui**	China
Naela Gabr**	Egypt
Yolanda Ferrer Gómez*	Cuba
Aída González Martínez*	Mexico
Savitri Goonesekere**	Sri Lanka
Rosalyn Hazelle**	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Salma Khan*	Bangladesh
Yung-Chung Kim*	Republic of Korea
Rosario Manalo**	Philippines
Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini**	South Africa
Ahoua Ouedraogo*	Burkina Faso
Zelmira Regazzoli**	Argentina
Anne Lise Ryel*	Norway
Hanna Beate Schöpp-Schilling*	Germany
Carmel Shalev**	Israel
Kongit Sinegiorgis*	Ethiopia
Chikako Taya**	Japan

* Term of office expires in 2000.
** Term of office expires in 2002.

Annex VI

Status of submission and consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as at 1 August 2000

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
A. Initial reports			
Albania	10 June 1995		
Algeria	21 June 1997	1 September 1998 (CEDAW/C/DZA/1) 1 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/DZA/1/Add.1)	Twentieth (1999)
Andorra	14 February 1998	23 June 2000 (CEDAW/C/AND/1)	
Angola	17 October 1987		
Antigua and Barbuda	31 August 1990	21 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/ANT/1-3)	Seventeenth (1997)
Argentina	14 August 1986	6 October 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.39)	Seventh (1988)
Armenia	13 October 1994	30 November 1994 (CEDAW/C/ARM/1) 10 February 1997 (CEDAW/C/ARM/1/Corr.1)	Seventeenth (1997)
Australia	27 August 1984	3 October 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.40)	Seventh (1988)
Austria	30 April 1983	20 October 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.17)	Fourth (1985)
Azerbaijan	9 August 1996	11 September 1996 (CEDAW/C/AZE/1)	Eighteenth (1998)
Bahamas	5 November 1994		
Bangladesh	6 December 1985	12 March 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.34)	Sixth (1987)
Barbados	3 September 1982	11 April 1990 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.64)	Eleventh (1992)
Belarus	3 September 1982	4 October 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.5)	Second (1983)
Belgium	9 August 1986	20 July 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.53)	Eighth (1989)

States parties	Date due*	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Belize	15 June 1991		Twenty-first (1999)
Benin	11 April 1993		
Bhutan	30 September 1982		
Bolivia	8 July 1991	8 July 1991 (CEDAW/C/BOL/1) 26 August 1993 (CEDAW/C/BOL/1/Add.1)	Fourteenth (1995)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 October 1994		
Botswana	12 September 1997		
Brazil	2 March 1985		
Bulgaria	10 March 1983	13 June 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.15)	Fourth (1985)
Burkina Faso	13 November 1988	24 May 1990 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.67)	Tenth (1991)
Burundi	7 February 1993	1 June 2000 (CEDAW/C/BDI/1)	
Cambodia	14 November 1993		
Cameroon	22 September 1995	9 May 1999 (CEDAW/C/CMR/1)	Twenty-third (2000)
Canada	9 January 1983	15 July 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.16)	Fourth (1985)
Cape Verde	3 September 1982		
Central African Republic	21 July 1992		
Chad	9 July 1996		
Chile	6 January 1991	3 September 1991 (CEDAW/C/CHI/1)	Fourteenth (1995)
China	3 September 1982	25 May 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.14)	Third (1984)
Colombia	18 February 1983	16 January 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.32)	Sixth (1987)
Comoros	30 November 1995		
Congo	25 August 1983		
Costa Rica	4 May 1987		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Côte d'Ivoire	17 January 1997		
Croatia	9 October 1993	10 January 1995 (CEDAW/C/CRO/1)	Eighteenth (1998)
Cuba	3 September 1982	27 September 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.4)	Second (1983)
Cyprus	22 August 1986	2 February 1994 (CEDAW/C/CYP/1-2)	Fifteenth (1996)
Czech Republic	24 March 1994	30 October 1995 (CEDAW/C/CZE/1)	Eighteenth (1998)
Democratic Republic of the Congo[b]	16 November 1987	1 March 1994 (CEDAW/C/ZAR/1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Denmark	21 May 1984	30 July 1984 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.22)	Fifth (1986)
Djibouti	2 January 2000		
Dominica	3 September 1982		
Dominican Republic	2 October 1983	2 May 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.37)	Seventh (1988)
Ecuador	9 December 1982	14 August 1984 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.23)	Fifth (1986)
Egypt	18 October 1982	2 February 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.10)	Third (1984)
El Salvador	18 September 1982	3 November 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.19)	Fifth (1986)
Equatorial Guinea	22 November 1985	16 March 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.50)	Eighth (1989)
Eritrea	5 October 1996		
Estonia	20 November 1992		
Ethiopia	10 October 1982	22 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/ETH/1-3) 16 October 1995 (CEDAW/C/ETH/1-3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
Fiji	27 September 1996	29 February 2000 (CEDAW/C/FIJ/1)	
Finland	4 October 1987	16 February 1988 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.56)	Eighth (1989)
France	13 January 1985	13 February 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.33)	Sixth (1987)

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Gabon	20 February 1984	19 June 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.54)	Eighth (1989)
Gambia	16 May 1994		
Georgia	25 November 1995	9 March 1998 (CEDAW/C/GEO/1) 6 April 1999 (CEDAW/C/GEO/1/Add.1) 21 May 1999 (CEDAW/C/GEO/1/Add.1/Corr.1)	Twenty-first (1999)
Germany	9 August 1986	15 September 1988 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.59)	Ninth (1990)
Ghana	1 February 1987	29 January 1991 (CEDAW/C/GHA/1-2)	Eleventh (1992)
Greece	7 July 1984	5 April 1985 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.28)	Sixth (1987)
Grenada	29 September 1991		
Guatemala	11 September 1983	2 April 1991 (CEDAW/C/GUA/1-2 and Corr.1) 7 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/GUA/1-2/Amend.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Guinea	8 September 1983		
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1986		
Guyana	3 September 1982	23 January 1990 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.63)	Thirteenth (1994)
Haiti	3 September 1982		
Honduras	2 April 1984	3 December 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.44)	Eleventh (1992)
Hungary	3 September 1982	20 September 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.3)	Third (1984)
Iceland	18 July 1986	5 May 1993 (CEDAW/C/ICE/1-2)	Fifteenth (1996)
India	8 August 1994	2 February 1999 (CEDAW/C/IND/1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Indonesia	13 October 1985	17 March 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.36)	Seventh (1988)
Iraq	12 September 1987	16 May 1990 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.66/Rev.1)	Twelfth (1993)

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Ireland	22 January 1987	18 February 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.47)	Eighth (1989)
Israel	2 November 1992	12 January 1994[c] 7 April 1997 (CEDAW/C/ISR/1-2)	Seventeenth (1997)
Italy	10 July 1986	20 October 1989 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.62)	Tenth (1991)
Jamaica	18 November 1985	12 September 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.38)	Seventh (1988)
Japan	25 July 1986	13 March 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.48)	Seventh (1988)
Jordan	31 July 1993	27 October 1997 (CEDAW/C/JOR/1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Kazakhstan	25 September 1999	26 January 2000 (CEDAW/C/KAZ/1)	
Kenya	8 April 1985	4 December 1990 (CEDAW/C/KEN/1-2)	Twelfth (1993)
Kuwait	1 October 1995		
Kyrgyzstan	12 March 1998	26 August 1998 (CEDAW/C/KGZ/1)	Twentieth (1999)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1982		
Latvia	14 May 1993		
Lebanon	21 May 1998		
Lesotho	21 September 1996		
Liberia	16 August 1985		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 June 1990	18 February 1991 (CEDAW/C/LIB/1) 4 October 1993 (CEDAW/C/LIB/1/Add.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Liechtenstein	21 January 1997	4 August 1997 (CEDAW/C/LIE/1)	Twentieth (1999)
Lithuania	17 February 1995	4 June 1998 (CEDAW/C/LTU/1)	Twenty-third (2000)
Luxembourg	4 March 1990	13 November 1996 (CEDAW/C/LUX/1)	Seventeenth (1997)

States parties	*Date due*[a]	*Date of submission*	*Considered by Committee (session (year))*
Madagascar	16 April 1990	21 May 1990 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.65) 8 November 1993 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.65/Rev.2)	 Thirteenth (1994)
Malawi	11 April 1988	15 July 1988 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.58)	Ninth (1990)
Malaysia	4 August 1996		
Maldives	1 July 1994	28 January 1999 (CEDAW/C/MDV/1)	
Mali	10 October 1986	13 November 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.43)	Seventh (1988)
Malta	7 April 1992		
Mauritius	8 August 1985	23 February 1992 (CEDAW/C/MAR/1-2)	Fourteenth (1995)
Mexico	3 September 1982	14 September 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.2)	Second (1983)
Mongolia	3 September 1982	18 November 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.20)	Fifth (1986)
Morocco	21 July 1994	14 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/MOR/1)	Sixteenth (1997)
Mozambique	16 May 1998		
Myanmar	21 August 1998	14 March 1999 (CEDAW/C/MNR/1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Namibia	23 December 1993	4 November 1996 (CEDAW/C/NAM/1)	Seventeenth (1997)
Nepal	22 May 1992	16 November 1998 (CEDAW/C/NPL/1)	Twenty-first (1999)
Netherlands	22 August 1992	19 November 1992 (CEDAW/C/NET/1) 17 September 1993 (CEDAW/C/NET/1/Add.1) 20 September 1993 (CEDAW/C/NET/1/Add.2) 9 October 1993 (CEDAW/C/NET/1/Add.3)	)))) Thirteenth (1994)))))

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
New Zealand	9 February 1986	3 October 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.41)	Seventh (1988)
Nicaragua	26 November 1982	22 September 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.55)	Eighth (1989)
Nigeria	13 July 1986	1 April 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.49)	Seventh (1987)
Norway	3 September 1982	18 November 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.7)	Third (1984)
Pakistan	11 April 1997		
Panama	28 November 1982	12 December 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.9)	Fourth (1985)
Papua New Guinea	11 February 1996		
Paraguay	6 May 1988	4 June 1992 (CEDAW/C/PAR/1-2) 23 August 1995 (CEDAW/C/PAR/1-2/Add.1) 20 November 1995 (CEDAW/C/PAR/1-2/Add.2)	Fifteenth (1996)
Peru	13 October 1983	14 September 1988 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.60)	Ninth (1990)
Philippines	4 September 1982	22 October 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.6)	Third (1984)
Poland	3 September 1982	10 October 1985 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.31)	Sixth (1987)
Portugal	3 September 1982	19 July 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.21)	Fifth (1986)
Republic of Korea	26 January 1986	13 March 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.35)	Sixth (1987)
Republic of Moldova	31 July 1995	26 September 1998 (CEDAW/C/MDA/1)	Twenty-third (2000)
Romania	6 February 1983	14 January 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.45)	Twelfth (1993)
Russian Federation	3 September 1982	2 March 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.12)	Second (1983)
Rwanda	3 September 1982	24 May 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.13)	Third (1984)
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1986		

States parties	Date due*	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Saint Lucia	7 November 1983		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1982	27 September 1991 (CEDAW/C/STV/1-3) 28 July 1994 (CEDAW/C/STV/1-3/Add.1)	Sixteenth (1997)
Samoa	25 October 1993		
Senegal	7 March 1986	5 November 1986 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.42)	Seventh (1988)
Seychelles	4 June 1993		
Sierra Leone	11 December 1989		
Singapore	4 November 1996	1 December 1999 (CEDAW/C/SGP/1)	
Slovakia	27 June 1994	29 April 1996 (CEDAW/C/SVK/1) 11 May 1998 (CEDAW/C/SVK/1/Add.1)	Nineteenth (1998)
Slovenia	5 August 1993	23 November 1993 (CEDAW/C/SVN/1)	Sixteenth (1997)
South Africa	14 January 1997	5 February 1998 (CEDAW/C/ZAF/1)	Nineteenth (1998)
Spain	4 February 1985	20 August 1985 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.30)	Sixth (1987)
Sri Lanka	4 November 1982	7 July 1985 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.29)	Sixth (1987)
Suriname	31 March 1994		
Sweden	3 September 1982	22 October 1982 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.8)	Second (1983)
Switzerland	26 April 1998		
Tajikistan	25 October 1994		
Thailand	8 September 1986	1 June 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.51)	Ninth (1990)
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 February 1995		
Togo	26 October 1984		
Trinidad and Tobago	11 February 1991		

States parties	Date due	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Tunisia	20 October 1986	17 September 1993 (CEDAW/C/TUN/1-2)	Fourteenth (1995)
Turkey	19 January 1987	27 January 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.46)	Ninth (1990)
Turkmenistan	31 May 1998		
Uganda	21 August 1986	1 June 1992 (CEDAW/C/UGA/1-2)	Fourteenth (1995)
Ukraine	3 September 1982	2 March 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.11)	Second (1983)
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 May 1987	25 June 1987 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.52)	Ninth (1990)
United Republic of Tanzania	19 September 1986	9 March 1988 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.57)	Ninth (1990)
Uruguay	8 November 1982	23 November 1984 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.27)	Seventh (1988)
Uzbekistan	18 August 1996	19 January 2000 (CEDAW/C/UZB/1)	
Vanuatu	8 October 1996		
Venezuela	1 June 1984	27 August 1984 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.24)	Fifth (1986)
Viet Nam	19 March 1983	2 October 1984 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.25)	Fifth (1986)
Yemen	29 June 1985	23 January 1989 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.61)	Twelfth (1993)
Yugoslavia	28 March 1983	3 November 1983 (CEDAW/C/5/Add.18)	Fourth (1985)
Zambia	21 July 1986	6 March 1991 (CEDAW/C/ZAM/1-2)	Thirteenth (1994)
Zimbabwe	12 June 1992	28 April 1996 (CEDAW/C/ZWE/1)	Eighteenth (1998)
B. Second periodic reports			
Albania	10 June 1999		
Angola	17 October 1991		
Antigua and Barbuda	31 August 1994	21 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/ANT/1-3)	Seventeenth (1997)

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Argentina	14 August 1990	13 February 1992 (CEDAW/C/ARG/2) 27 May 1994 (CEDAW/C/ARG/2/Add.1) 19 August 1994 (CEDAW/C/ARG/2/Add.2)	Seventeenth (1997)
Armenia	13 September 1998	23 August 1999 (CEDAW/C/ARM/2)	
Australia	27 August 1988	24 July 1992 (CEDAW/C/AUL/2)	Thirteenth (1994)
Austria	30 April 1987	18 December 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.27)	Tenth (1991)
Bahamas	5 November 1998		
Bangladesh	6 December 1989	23 February 1990 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.30)	Twelfth (1993)
Barbados	3 September 1986	4 December 1991 (CEDAW/C/BAR/2-3)	Thirteenth (1994)
Belarus	3 September 1986	3 March 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.5)	Eighth (1989)
Belgium	9 August 1990	9 February 1993 (CEDAW/C/BEL/2)	Fifteenth (1996)
Belize	15 June 1995	19 June 1996 (CEDAW/C/BLZ/1-2)	Twenty-first (1999)
Benin	11 April 1997		
Bhutan	30 September 1986		
Bolivia	8 July 1995		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 September 1998		
Brazil	2 March 1989		
Bulgaria	10 March 1987	6 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/BGR/2-3)	Eighteenth (1998)
Burkina Faso	13 November 1992	11 December 1997 (CEDAW/C/BFA/2-3)	Twenty-second (2000)
Burundi	7 February 1997		
Cambodia	14 November 1997		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Cameroon	22 September 1999		
Canada	9 January 1987	20 January 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.11)	Ninth (1990)
Cape Verde	3 September 1986		
Central African Republic	21 July 1996		
Chad	9 July 2000		
Chile	6 January 1995	9 March 1995 (CEDAW/C/CHI/2)	Twenty-first (1999)
China	3 September 1986	22 June 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.26)	Eleventh (1992)
Colombia	18 February 1987	14 January 1993 (CEDAW/C/COL/2-3) 2 September 1993 (CEDAW/C/COL/2-3/Rev.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Comoros	30 November 1999		
Congo	25 August 1987		
Costa Rica	4 May 1991		
Croatia	9 October 1997		
Cuba	3 September 1986	13 March 1992 (CEDAW/C/CUB/2-3) 30 November 1995 (CEDAW/C/CUB/2-3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
Cyprus	22 August 1990	2 February 1994 (CEDAW/C/CYP/1-2)	Fifteenth (1996)
Czech Republic	24 March 1997		
Democratic Republic of the Congo[b]	16 November 1991	24 October 1996 (CEDAW/C/ZAR/2) 27 August 1998 (CEDAW/C/ZAR/2/Add.1 and Corr.1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Denmark	21 May 1988	2 June 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.14)	Tenth (1991)
Dominica	3 September 1986		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Dominican Republic	2 October 1987	26 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/DOM/2-3)	Eighteenth (1998)
Ecuador	9 December 1986	28 May 1990 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.31)	Thirteenth (1994)
Egypt	18 October 1986	19 December 1986 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.2)	Ninth (1990)
El Salvador	18 September 1986	18 December 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.12)	Eleventh (1992)
Equatorial Guinea	22 November 1989	6 January 1994 (CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3)	
Estonia	20 November 1996		
Ethiopia	10 October 1986	22 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/ETH/1-3) 16 October 1995 (CEDAW/C/ETH/1-3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
Finland	4 October 1991	9 February 1993 (CEDAW/C/FIN/2)	Fourteenth (1995)
France	13 January 1989	10 December 1990 (CEDAW/C/FRA/2 and Rev.1)	Twelfth (1993)
Gabon	20 February 1988		
Gambia	16 May 1998		
Georgia	25 November 1999		
Germany	9 August 1990	8 October 1996 (CEDAW/C/DEU/2-3)	Twenty-second (2000)
Ghana	1 February 1991	29 January 1991 (CEDAW/C/GHA/1-2)	Eleventh (1992)
Greece	7 July 1988	1 March 1996 (CEDAW/C/GRC/2-3)	Twentieth (1999)
Grenada	29 September 1995		
Guatemala	11 September 1987	2 April 1991 (CEDAW/C/GUA/1-2 and Corr.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
		7 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/GUA/1-2/Amend.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Guinea	8 September 1987		
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1990		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Guyana	3 September 1986	20 September 1999 (CEDAW/C/GUY/2)	
Haiti	3 September 1986		
Honduras	2 April 1988	28 October 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.9)	Eleventh (1992)
Hungary	3 September 1986	29 September 1986 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.1)	Seventh (1988)
Iceland	18 July 1990	5 May 1993 (CEDAW/C/ICE/1-2)	Fifteenth (1996)
India	8 August 1998		
Indonesia	13 October 1989	6 February 1997 (CEDAW/C/IDN/2-3)	Eighteenth (1998)
Iraq	12 September 1991	13 October 1998 (CEDAW/C/IRQ/2-3)	Twenty-third (2000)
Ireland	22 January 1991	6 February 1997 (CEDAW/C/IRL/2-3)	Twenty-first (1999)
Israel	2 November 1996	7 April 1997 (CEDAW/C/ISR/1-2)	Seventeenth (1997)
Italy	10 July 1990	1 March 1994 (CEDAW/C/ITA/2)	Seventeenth (1997)
Jamaica	18 November 1989	17 February 1998 (CEDAW/C/JAM/2-4)	
Japan	25 July 1990	21 February 1992 (CEDAW/C/JPN/2)	Thirteenth (1994)
Jordan	31 July 1997	19 November 1999 (CEDAW/C/JOR/2)	Twenty-second (2000)
Kenya	8 April 1989	4 December 1990 (CEDAW/C/KEN/1-2)	Twelfth (1993)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1986		
Latvia	14 May 1997		
Liberia	16 August 1989		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 June 1994	14 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/LBY/2)	
Lithuania	17 February 1999	4 April 2000 (CEDAW/C/LTU/2)	Twenty-third (2000)
Luxembourg	4 March 1994	8 April 1997 (CEDAW/C/LUX/2)	Seventeenth (1997)
Madagascar	16 April 1994		
Malawi	11 April 1992		
Maldives	1 July 1998		
Mali	10 October 1990		
Malta	7 April 1996		
Mauritius	8 August 1989	23 January 1992 (CEDAW/C/MAR/1-2)	Fourteenth (1995)
Mexico	3 September 1986	3 December 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.10)	Ninth (1990)
Mongolia	3 September 1986	17 March 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.7)	Ninth (1990)
Morocco	21 July 1998		
Namibia	23 December 1997		
Nepal	22 May 1996		
Netherlands	22 August 1996	10 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/NET/2) (CEDAW/C/NET/2/Add.1) (CEDAW/C/NET/2/Add.2)	
New Zealand	9 February 1990	3 November 1992 (CEDAW/C/NZE/2) 27 October 1993 (CEDAW/C/NZE/2/Add.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Nicaragua	26 November 1986	16 March 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.20)	Twelfth (1993)
Nigeria	13 July 1990	13 February 1997 (CEDAW/C/NGA/2-3)	Nineteenth (1998)
Norway	3 September 1986	23 June 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.15)	Tenth (1991)
Panama	28 November 1986	17 January 1997 (CEDAW/C/PAN/2-3)	Nineteenth (1998)

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Paraguay	6 May 1992	4 June 1992 (CEDAW/C/PAR/1-2) 23 August 1995 (CEDAW/C/PAR/1-2/Add.1) 20 November 1995 (CEDAW/C/PAR/1-2/Add.2)	Fifteenth (1996)
Peru	13 October 1987	13 February 1990 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.29)	Fourteenth (1995)
Philippines	4 September 1986	12 December 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.17)	Tenth (1991)
Poland	3 September 1986	17 November 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.16)	Tenth (1991)
Portugal	3 September 1986	18 May 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.22)	Tenth (1991)
Republic of Korea	26 January 1990	19 December 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.28 and Corr.1)	Twelfth (1993)
Republic of Moldova	31 July 1999		
Romania	6 February 1987	19 October 1992 (CEDAW/C/ROM/2-3)	Twelfth (1993)
Russian Federation	3 September 1986	10 February 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.4)	Eighth (1989)
Rwanda	3 September 1986	7 March 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.13)	Tenth (1991)
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1990		
Saint Lucia	7 November 1987		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1986	27 September 1991 (CEDAW/C/STV/1-3) 28 July 1994 (CEDAW/C/STV/1-3/Add.1)	Sixteenth (1997)
Samoa	25 October 1997		
Senegal	7 March 1990	23 September 1991 (CEDAW/C/SEN/2 and Amend.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Seychelles	4 June 1997		
Sierra Leone	11 December 1993		
Slovakia	27 June 1998		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Slovenia	5 August 1997	26 April 1999 (CEDAW/C/SVN/2)	
Spain	4 February 1989	9 February 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.19)	Eleventh (1992)
Sri Lanka	4 November 1986	29 December 1988 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.18)	Eleventh (1992)
Suriname	31 March 1998		
Sweden	3 September 1986	10 March 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.6)	Seventh (1988)
Tajikistan	25 October 1998		
Thailand	8 September 1990	3 March 1997 (CEDAW/C/THA/2-3)	Twentieth (1999)
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 February 1999		
Togo	26 October 1988		
Trinidad and Tobago	11 February 1995		
Tunisia	20 October 1990	17 September 1993 (CEDAW/C/TUN/1-2)	Fourteenth (1995)
Turkey	19 January 1991	7 February 1994[c] 3 September 1996 (CEDAW/C/TUR/2-3)	Sixteenth (1997)
Uganda	21 August 1990	1 June 1992 (CEDAW/C/UGA/1-2)	Fourteenth (1995)
Ukraine	3 September 1986	13 August 1987 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.8)	Ninth (1990)
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 May 1991	11 May 1991 (CEDAW/C/UK/2 and Amend.1)	Twelfth (1993)
United Republic of Tanzania	19 September 1990	25 September 1996 (CEDAW/C/TZA/2-3)	Nineteenth (1998)
Uruguay	8 November 1986	3 February 1998 (CEDAW/C/URY/2-3)	
Venezuela	1 June 1988	18 April 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.21)	Eleventh (1992)

States parties	Date due	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Viet Nam	19 March 1987	2 November 1999 (CEDAW/C/VNM/2)	
Yemen	29 June 1989	8 June 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.24 and Amend.1)	Twelfth (1993)
Yugoslavia	28 March 1987	31 May 1989 (CEDAW/C/13/Add.23)	Tenth (1991)
Zambia	21 July 1990	6 March 1991 (CEDAW/C/ZAM/1-2)	Thirteenth (1994)
Zimbabwe	12 June 1996		
C. Third periodic reports			
Angola	17 October 1995		
Antigua and Barbuda	31 August 1998	21 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/ANT/1-3)	Seventeenth (1997)
Argentina	14 August 1994	1 October 1996 (CEDAW/C/ARG/3)	Seventeenth (1997)
Australia	27 August 1992	1 March 1995 (CEDAW/C/AUL/3)	Seventeenth (1997)
Austria	30 April 1991	25 April 1997 (CEDAW/C/AUT/3-4)	Twenty-third (2000)
Bangladesh	6 December 1993	26 January 1993[c] 27 March 1997 (CEDAW/C/BGD/3-4)	Seventeenth (1997)
Barbados	3 September 1990	4 December 1991 (CEDAW/C/BAR/2-3)	Thirteenth (1994)
Belarus	3 September 1990	1 July 1993 (CEDAW/C/BLR/3)	Twenty-second (2000)
Belgium	9 August 1994	29 September 1998 (CEDAW/C/BEL/3-4)	
Belize	15 June 1999		
Bhutan	30 September 1990		
Bolivia	7 July 1999		
Brazil	2 March 1993		
Bulgaria	10 March 1991	6 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/BGR/2-3)	Eighteenth (1998)

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Burkina Faso	13 November 1996	11 December 1997 (CEDAW/C/BFA/2-3)	Twenty-second (2000)
Canada	9 January 1991	9 September 1992 (CEDAW/C/CAN/3)	Sixteenth (1997)
Cape Verde	3 September 1990		
Central African Republic	21 July 2000		
Chile	6 January 1999	1 November 1999 (CEDAW/C/CHI/3)	Twenty-first (1999)
China	3 September 1990	29 May 1997 (CEDAW/C/CHN/3-4)	Twentieth (1999)
Colombia	18 February 1991	14 January 1993 (CEDAW/C/COL/2-3) 2 September 1993 (CEDAW/C/COL/2-3/Rev.1)	Thirteenth (1994)
Congo	25 August 1991		
Costa Rica	4 May 1995		
Cuba	3 September 1990	13 March 1992 (CEDAW/C/CUB/2-3) 30 November 1995 (CEDAW/C/CUB/2-3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
Cyprus	22 August 1994		
Democratic Republic of the Congo[b]	16 November 1995	2 July 1998 (CEDAW/C/COD/1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Denmark	21 May 1992	7 May 1993 (CEDAW/C/DEN/3)	Sixteenth (1997)
Dominica	3 September 1990		
Dominican Republic	2 October 1991	26 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/DOM/2-3)	Eighteenth (1998)
Ecuador	9 December 1990	23 December 1991 (CEDAW/C/ECU/3)	Thirteenth (1994)
Egypt	18 October 1990	30 January 1996 (CEDAW/C/EGY/3)	
El Salvador	18 September 1990		
Equatorial Guinea	22 November 1993	6 January 1994 (CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3)	

States parties	Date due*	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Ethiopia	10 October 1990	22 April 1993 (CEDAW/C/ETH/1-3) 16 October 1995 (CEDAW/C/ETH/1-3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
Finland	4 October 1995	28 January 1997 (CEDAW/C/FIN/3)	
France	13 January 1993	5 October 1999 (CEDAW/C/FRA/3)	
Gabon	20 February 1992		
Germany	9 August 1994	8 October 1996 (CEDAW/C/DEU/2-3)	Twenty-second (2000)
Ghana	1 February 1995		
Greece	7 July 1992	1 March 1996 (CEDAW/C/GRC/2-3)	Twentieth (1999)
Grenada	2 September 1999		
Guatemala	11 September 1991		
Guinea	8 September 1991		
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1994		
Guyana	3 September 1990		
Haiti	3 September 1990		
Honduras	2 April 1992	31 May 1991 (CEDAW/C/HON/3)	Eleventh (1992)
Hungary	3 September 1990	4 April 1991 (CEDAW/C/HUN/3) 3 November 1995 (CEDAW/C/HUN/3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
Iceland	3 July 1994	15 July 1998 (CEDAW/C/ICE/3-4)	
Indonesia	13 October 1993	6 February 1997 (CEDAW/C/IDN/2-3)	Eighteenth (1998)
Iraq	12 September 1995	13 October 1998 (CEDAW/C/IRQ/2-3)	Twenty-third (2000)
Ireland	22 January 1995	7 August 1997 (CEDAW/C/IRL/2-3)	Twenty-first (1999)
Italy	10 July 1994	21 June 1997 (CEDAW/C/ITA/3)	Seventeenth (1997)

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Jamaica	18 November 1993	17 February 1998 (CEDAW/C/JAM/2-4)	
Japan	25 July 1994	28 October 1993 (CEDAW/C/JPN/3)	Thirteenth (1994)
Kenya	8 April 1993	5 January 2000 (CEDAW/KEN/3-4)	
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1990		
Liberia	16 August 1993		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 June 1998		
Luxembourg	4 March 1998	12 March 1998 (CEDAW/C/LUX/3) 17 June 1998 (CEDAW/C/LUX/3/Add.1)	Twenty-second (2000)
Madagascar	16 April 1998		
Malawi	11 April 1996		
Mali	10 October 1994		
Malta	7 April 2000		
Mauritius	8 August 1993		
Mexico	3 September 1990	1 December 1992[c] 7 April 1997 (CEDAW/C/MEX/3-4)	Eighteenth (1998)
Mongolia	3 September 1990	8 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/MNG/3-4)	
Nepal	22 May 2000		
New Zealand	9 February 1994	2 March 1998 (CEDAW/C/NZL/3-4) 15 April 1998 (CEDAW/C/NZL/3-4/Add.1)	Nineteenth (1998)
Nicaragua	26 November 1990	15 October 1992 (CEDAW/C/NIC/3)	Twelfth (1993)
Nigeria	13 July 1994	13 February 1997 (CEDAW/C/NGA/2-3)	Nineteenth (1998)
Norway	3 September 1990	25 January 1991 (CEDAW/C/NOR/3)	Fourteenth (1995)

States parties	Date due*	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Panama	28 November 1990	17 January 1997 (CEDAW/C/PAN/2-3)	Nineteenth (1998)
Paraguay	6 May 1996		
Peru	13 October 1991	25 November 1994 (CEDAW/C/PER/3-4)	Nineteenth (1998)
Philippines	4 September 1990	20 January 1993 (CEDAW/C/PHI/3)	Sixteenth (1997)
Poland	3 September 1990	22 November 1990 (CEDAW/C/18/Add.2)	Tenth (1991)
Portugal	3 September 1990	10 December 1990 (CEDAW/C/18/Add.3)	Tenth (1991)
Republic of Korea	26 January 1994	8 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/KOR/3)	Nineteenth (1998)
Romania	6 February 1991	19 October 1992 (CEDAW/C/ROM/2-3)	Twelfth (1993)
Russian Federation	3 September 1990	24 July 1991 (CEDAW/C/USR/3)	Fourteenth (1995)
Rwanda	3 September 1990	18 January 1991 (CEDAW/C/RWA/3)	Twelfth (1993)
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1994		
Saint Lucia	7 November 1991		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1990	27 September 1991 (CEDAW/C/STV/1-3) 28 July 1994 (CEDAW/C/STV/1-3/Add.1)	Sixteenth (1997)
Senegal	7 March 1994		
Sierra Leone	11 December 1997		
Spain	4 February 1993	20 May 1996 (CEDAW/C/ESP/3)	Twenty-first (1999)
Sri Lanka	4 November 1990	7 October 1999 (CEDAW/LKA/3-4)	
Sweden	3 September 1990	3 October 1990 (CEDAW/C/18/Add.1)	Twelfth (1999)
Thailand	8 September 1994	3 March 1997 (CEDAW/C/THA/2-3)	Twentieth (1999)
Togo	26 October 1992		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Trinidad and Tobago	11 February 1999		
Tunisia	20 October 1994	6 June 2000 (CEDAW/C/TUN/3-4)	
Turkey	19 January 1995	3 September 1996 (CEDAW/C/TUR/2-3)	Sixteenth (1997)
Uganda	21 August 1994	22 May 2000 (CEDAW/C/UGA/3)	
Ukraine	3 September 1990	31 May 1991 (CEDAW/C/UKR/3) 21 November 1995 (CEDAW/C/UKR/3/Add.1)	Fifteenth (1996)
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 May 1995	16 August 1995 (CEDAW/C/UK/3) 8 August 1997 (CEDAW/C/UK/3/Add.1) 14 July 1998 (CEDAW/C/UK/3/Add.2)	Twenty-first (1999)
United Republic of Tanzania	19 September 1994	25 September 1996 (CEDAW/C/TZA/2-3)	Nineteenth (1998)
Uruguay	8 November 1990	8 February 1999 (CEDAW/C/URY/2-3)	
Venezuela	1 June 1992	8 February 1995 (CEDAW/C/VEN/3)	Sixteenth (1997)
Viet Nam	19 March 1991		
Yemen	29 June 1993	13 November 1992 (CEDAW/C/YEM/3)	Twelfth (1993)
Yugoslavia	28 March 1991	14 October 1998 (CEDAW/C/YUG/3)	
Zambia	21 July 1994	12 August 1999 (CEDAW/C/ZAM/3-4)	

D. Fourth periodic reports

Angola	17 October 1999		
Argentina	14 August 1998	18 January 2000 (CEDAW/C/ARG/4)	
Australia	27 August 1996		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Austria	30 April 1995	25 April 1997 (CEDAW/C/AUT/3-4)	Twenty-third (2000)
Bangladesh	6 December 1997	27 March 1997 (CEDAW/C/BGD/3-4)	Seventeenth (1997)
Barbados	3 September 1995		
Belarus	3 September 1994		
Belgium	9 August 1998	29 October 1998 (CEDAW/C/BEL/3-4)	
Bhutan	30 September 1994		
Brazil	2 March 1997		
Bulgaria	10 March 1995		
Canada	9 January 1995	2 October 1995 (CEDAW/C/CAN/4)	Sixteenth (1997)
Cape Verde	3 September 1994		
China	3 September 1994	29 May 1997 (CEDAW/C/CHN/3-4)	Twentieth (1999)
Colombia	18 February 1995	8 July 1997 (CEDAW/C/COL/4)	Twentieth (1999)
Congo	25 August 1995		
Costa Rica	4 May 1999		
Cuba	3 September 1994	27 September 1999 (CEDAW/C/CUB/4)	Twenty-third (2000)
Cyprus	22 August 1998		
Democratic Republic of the Congo[b]	16 November 1999		
Denmark	21 May 1996	9 January 1997 (CEDAW/C/DEN/4)	
Dominica	3 September 1994		
Dominican Republic	2 October 1995	29 October 1997 (CEDAW/C/DOM/4)	Eighteenth (1998)
Ecuador	9 December 1994		
Egypt	18 October 1994	30 March 2000 (CEDAW/C/EGY/4-5)	
El Salvador	18 October 1994		

States parties	*Date due*[a]	*Date of submission*	*Considered by Committee (session (year))*
Equatorial Guinea	22 November 1997		
Ethiopia	10 October 1994		
Finland	4 October 1999	23 November 1999 (CEDAW/C/FIN/4)	
France	13 January 1997		
Gabon	20 February 1996		
Germany	9 August 1998	27 October 1998 (CEDAW/C/DEU/4)	Twenty-second (2000)
Ghana	1 February 1999		
Greece	7 July 1996		
Guatemala	11 September 1995		
Guinea	8 September 1995		
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1998		
Guyana	3 September 1994		
Haiti	3 September 1994		
Honduras	2 April 1996		
Hungary	3 September 1994		
Iceland	3 July 1998	15 July 1998 (CEDAW/C/ICE/3-4)	
Indonesia	13 October 1997		
Iraq	12 September 1999		
Ireland	22 January 1999		
Italy	10 July 1998		
Jamaica	18 November 1997	17 February 1998 (CEDAW/C/JAM/2-4)	
Japan	25 July 1998	24 July 1998 (CEDAW/C/JPN/4)	
Kenya	8 April 1997	5 January 2000 (CEDAW/C/KEN/3-4)	
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1994		
Liberia	16 August 1997		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Malawi	11 April 2000		
Mali	10 October 1998		
Mauritius	8 August 1997		
Mexico	3 September 1994	1 December 1992[c] 7 March 1997 (CEDAW/C/MEX/3-4) 9 July 1997 (CEDAW/C/MEX/3-4/Add.1)	Eighteenth (1998)
Mongolia	3 September 1994	8 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/MNG/3-4)	
New Zealand	9 February 1998	2 March 1998 (CEDAW/C/NZL/3-4) 15 April 1998 (CEDAW/C/NZL/3-4/Add.1)	Nineteenth (1998)
Nicaragua	26 November 1994	16 June 1998 (CEDAW/C/NIC/4)	
Nigeria	13 July 1998		
Norway	3 September 1994	1 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/NOR/4)	Fourteenth (1995)
Panama	28 November 1994		
Paraguay	6 May 2000		
Peru	13 October 1995	25 November 1994 (CEDAW/C/PER/3-4)	Nineteenth (1998)
Philippines	4 September 1994	22 April 1996 (CEDAW/C/PHI/4)	Sixteenth (1997)
Poland	3 September 1994		
Portugal	3 September 1994	23 November 1999 (CEDAW/C/PRT/4)	
Republic of Korea	26 January 1998	27 March 1998 (CEDAW/C/KOR/4)	Nineteenth (1998)
Romania	6 February 1995	10 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/ROM/4-5)	Twenty-third (2000)
Russian Federation	3 September 1994	31 August 1994 (CEDAW/C/USR/4)	Fourteenth (1995)
Rwanda	3 September 1994		
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1998		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Saint Lucia	7 November 1995		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1994		
Senegal	7 March 1998		
Spain	4 February 1997	20 October 1998 (CEDAW/C/ESP/4)	Twenty-first (1999)
Sri Lanka	4 November 1994	7 October 1999 (CEDAW/C/LKA/3-4)	
Sweden	3 September 1994	21 May 1996 (CEDAW/C/SWE/4)	
Thailand	8 September 1998		
Togo	26 October 1996		
Tunisia	20 October 1998		
Turkmenistan	31 May 2000		
Turkey	19 January 1999		
Uganda	21 August 1998		
Ukraine	3 November 1994	2 August 1999 (CEDAW/C/UKR/4-5)	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 May 1999	19 January 1999 (CEDAW/C/UK/4 and Add.1-4)	Twenty-first (1999)
United Republic of Tanzania	19 September 1998		
Uruguay	8 November 1994		
Venezuela	1 June 1996		
Viet Nam	19 March 1995		
Yemen	29 June 1997	8 March 2000 (CEDAW/C/YEM/4)	
Yugoslavia	28 March 1995		
Zambia	21 July 1998	12 August 1999 (CEDAW/C/ZAM/3-4)	

States parties	Date due*	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
E. Fifth periodic reports			
Austria	30 April 1999	20 September 1999 (CEDAW/C/AUT/5)	Twenty-third (2000)
Barbados	3 September 1999		
Belarus	3 September 1999		
Bhutan	30 September 1998		
Bulgaria	10 March 1999		
Canada	9 January 1999		
Cape Verde	3 September 1998		
China	3 September 1998		
Colombia	18 February 1999		
Congo	25 August 1999		
Cuba	3 September 1998		
Denmark	21 May 2000	13 June 2000 (CEDAW/C/DEN/5)	
Dominica	3 September 1998		
Dominican Republic	2 September 1999		
Ecuador	9 December 1998		
Egypt	9 October 1998	30 March 2000 (CEDAW/C/EGY/4-5)	
El Salvador	18 September 1998		
Ethiopia	10 October 1998		
Gabon	20 February 2000		
Gambia	16 May 2000		
Greece	7 July 2000		
Guatemala	11 September 1999		
Guinea	8 September 1999		
Guyana	3 September 1998		
Haiti	3 September 1998		
Honduras	2 April 2000		
Hungary	3 September 1998		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1998		
Mexico	3 September 1998		
Mongolia	3 September 1998		
Nicaragua	26 November 1998	2 September 1999 (CEDAW/C/NIC/5)	
Norway	3 September 1998	23 March 2000 (CEDAW/C/NOR/5)	
Panama	28 November 1998		
Peru	13 October 1999	21 July 2000 (CEDAW/C/PER/5)	
Philippines	4 September 1998		
Poland	3 September 1998		
Portugal	3 September 1998		
Romania	6 February 1999	10 December 1998 (CEDAW/C/ROM/4-5)	Twenty-third (2000)
Russian Federation	31 September 1998	3 March 1999 (CEDAW/C/USR/5)	
Rwanda	3 September 1998		
Saint Lucia	7 November 1999		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1998		
Sri Lanka	4 November 1998		
Sweden	3 September 1998		
Ukraine	3 September 1998	2 August 1999 (CEDAW/C/UKR/4-5)	
Uruguay	8 November 1998		
Venezuela	1 June 2000		
Viet Nam	19 March 1999		
Yugoslavia	28 March 1999		

States parties	Date due[a]	Date of submission	Considered by Committee (session (year))
F. Reports submitted on an exceptional basis			
Democratic Republic of the Congo[b]		16 January 1997 (oral report; see CEDAW/C/SR.317)	Sixteenth (1997)
Croatia		15 September 1994 (CEDAW/C/CRO/SP.1)	Fourteenth (1995)
Rwanda		31 January 1996 (oral report; see CEDAW/C/SR.306)	Fifteenth (1996)
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)		2 December 1993 (CEDAW/C/YUG/SP.1) 2 February 1994 (oral report; see CEDAW/C/SR.254)	Thirteenth (1994)

[a] One year prior to the due date, the Secretary-General invites the State party to submit its report.

[b] Effective 17 May 1997, Zaire was renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo.

[c] Report withdrawn.